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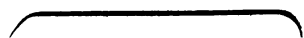
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AUTOBIOGRAPHY
OF
ELBERT OSBORN,
AN ITINERANT MINISTER OF THE METHODIST
EPISCOPAL CHURCH.

In two Parts.
PART I, FROM 1800 TO 1831.
PART II, FROM 1831 TO 1849.

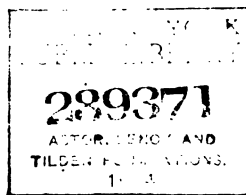
SIXTH EDITION.

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SANCTIFICATION; AND A MOST SUCCESSFUL REVIVAL-
IST IN UPPER CANADA.

Wooster passed through the wilderness of those remote regions
like a flame of fire.—DR. ABEL STEVENS.

New York :
PUBLISHED FOR THE AUTHOR,
300 MULBERRY-STREET.

1865.



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From Rev. Edwin E. Griswold, Pastor of the M. E. Church in Mulberry-street, New-York:—

"DEAR BROTHER—I have read your manuscript with much satisfaction. It is full of incident, and sufficiently interspersed with brief and pointed practical observations. If published, I think it will be very useful to the humble followers of Christ.

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"Late Pastor of the M. E. Church in Ferry-street, Albany."

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"I have read Brother Osborn's book, and believe it is adapted to do good.

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"Pastor of the Sullivan-street M. E. Church, New-York."

"I concur in the above.

"D. SMITH,

"Pastor of the Greene-street M. E. Church, New-York."

From the Rev. George Coles, formerly Assistant Editor of the Christian Advocate and Journal, now Pastor of the M. E. Church in Hudson, N. Y.

"I have read the entire manuscript entitled, 'Passages in the Life and Ministry of Elbert Osborn, an Itinerant Minister of the Methodist E. Church, &c.; and I hesitate not to say that, as a true and faithful narrative of God's dealings with one whose sole desire seems to have been to do the will of God, it is entitled to the fullest confidence of any one into whose hands it may fall. With a single eye to the glory of God in every line, the author, with a beautiful simplicity and unwavering truthfulness, traces those passages in his past life which strikingly illustrate the grace and providence of God."

"G. COLES."

• ———

From John M. Howe, M. D., New-York.

"I concur in the opinions expressed by the Rev. Geo. Coles and the Rev. E. E. Griswold, and heartily desire that the book may be extensively circulated and read, believing that it will be conducive in cultivating among professing Christians a continued and unwavering trust in the providence and grace of God.

"JOHN M. HOWE"

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riage ceremony, and with whose church they were afterward connected, was the Rev. Timothy Dwight, D. D., afterward president of Yale College.

For a few years my father endeavored to serve God ; but the state of experimental religion was very low, I fear, in that vicinity in those days. Contentions arose in the church, which were increased by political prejudices ; and these things, in connection with worldly cares and the desire of riches, gradually drew his heart away from the Lord. In such a state of mind, the faults and failings of professors of religion, and especially of ministers, were magnified in his views ; the arguments of skeptics insinuated themselves into his mind ; their sophisms shook his faith ; and some of the opinions which he had been taught made the downfall more easy ; and before I was six years of age he was secretly infidel in his sentiments. O how much harm is done by quarrels among professing Christians, and how carefully ought ministers, especially, to shun the appearance of evil, lest through their fault some soul should perish for whom Christ died !

My pious mother, though she did not know that her companion had become an unbeliever *in theory*, yet saw, to her sorrow, that he was

neglecting the practical duties of Christianity, and doubtless offered up fervent prayers to God in his behalf. It was a grief to her that he was disposed to permit a part of his house to be occupied occasionally as a ball-room. In the mean time, although I was very fond of reading and study, yet the exhibition of pride and self-will, which occasionally took place in my conduct, must have pained her heart. One of the earliest circumstances which I can remember was this :—A schoolmate of my elder brother called one morning on his way to school. He addressed some conversation to me in a friendly way ; but there was something in his manner which disgusted me, and, to his great surprise, I struck him in the face with my fist.

At another time, when I put on a pair of new shoes, my vanity and inconsideration were such that I well remember walking in a very consequential way back and forth across the room in which my brother, ten years older than myself, was sitting. As these shoes were made sharp-pointed at the toes, according to the fashion of the times, I took the liberty of giving my brother now and then a slight kick with my newly shod feet. He remonstrated, but I foolishly persisted : he *threatened to cut off the toes*, but *I did not heed his threats*, supposing he would

not put them in execution ; but when he took them off my feet, and laid one of them on a block, and raised the ax, my consternation was great. He however contented himself with cutting off such an extremely minute portion of the point of the sole, that no injury was done, but I was effectually cured of my kicking propensities.


Young as I was, the amusements in my father's ball-room excited my attention, and led to some attempts at imitation. What would have been the result to me had my father continued his course is known only to God. The members of churches in that vicinity, in general, said nothing against dancing. It is true, my pious mother advised me to read the Bible, and I followed her advice; and one passage particularly made a strong impression upon my mind, namely, Matt. xii, 36: "For every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account in the day of judgment." But my heart was yet under the dominion of pride and other evil passions of our nature; and my pride was often flattered by the remarks made by many of the acquaintances of my parents concerning the proficiency in learning which they were pleased to say that *I exhibited.*

My eldest brother, David, who was thirteen

years older than myself, was very studious. He took great pains to assist me in my studies, and particularly in acquiring some knowledge of the rudiments of arithmetic. He was an affectionate brother, moral in his habits, and I trust truly pious. My father loved him very tenderly, and had not ventured to communicate any of his infidel notions to him, when that God, who often takes his children from the evil to come, and also, by affliction, frequently brings the prodigal to a sense of his situation, saw fit to call my eldest brother from time to eternity. A fever of nine days' continuance terminated his mortal existence, in May, 1807. He was enabled to give satisfactory testimony to his friends, who conversed with him in his last illness, that Christ, the Saviour of sinners, was precious to his soul. This bereavement had an awakening influence on my father's mind. Even before his son's death, such a sense of his own ingratitude to God pressed upon his mind, that he sunk down to the ground and cried for mercy. If I recollect right, he told me that Jesus Christ seemed to be very near him, and that his presence filled him with awful horror. No more balls were attended at my father's house after the gentle spirit of *my brother* fled to the better world. *Dr. H. Humphrey*, then minister of a Congrega-

tional church about four miles from my father's house, and since president of Amherst College, Massachusetts, preached the funeral sermon from Psalm xxxiv, 19: "Many are the afflictions of the righteous; but the Lord delivereth him out of them all." After a few weeks, the bereaved father obtained a satisfactory sense of reclaiming and forgiving mercy. Now he visited the house of prayer, and talked with his family on the things of religion and of God. Occasionally he went some distance to hear the preaching of Methodist ministers, and was much pleased with their mode of preaching, and their views of gospel doctrines. And here let me say to the backslider, (if any such person should read these pages,) that perhaps God may take from *him* a beloved child, or some other dear relative, to call him back to God; or, what would be more awful, the wanderer himself may be cut off in his sins. Had my ungodly father, instead of my pious brother, been taken away, how dreadful would have been the event!

It was not till early in the year 1808 that I heard a Methodist minister preach. His name was Seth Crowell, and it was in a private house. I had never seen a person kneel in prayer before; and I looked at the kneeling minister, and *the few kneeling individuals* also, with amaze-



ment. I was still more amazed to hear some of them "*speak out aloud in meeting*," saying "Amen," in time of prayer. The next day this same minister preached in a school-house near another place of worship. I wished to hear Mr. C. again, but feared the scorn of some of my acquaintances; I therefore waited till they had gone into their place of worship, and then I ran over to the school-house. Young as I was, I found that "*the fear of man bringeth a snare.*" Mr. Crowell's text, on that occasion, was 1 John i, 8-10. Those who will turn to Dr. Bangs' description of this servant of the Lord, as found in the *History of Methodism*, vol. iii, pages 374-377, can form probably a better idea of the sermon than I can give them. One circumstance occurred which I will mention:—A thoughtless young woman amused herself by whispering and laughing in time of preaching; but her mirth was suitably and effectually re-proved by the minister, who said to her, in a most solemn manner, "Will you laugh an ambassador of God in the face?" During the next day Mr. Crowell called at our house and took dinner there; and this was the first pastoral visit made at my father's residence by a Methodist minister. In the mean time, the *sermons and pious conversations* which I had

heard, and the religious books which I had read, tended, with God's blessing, to make some favorable impression on my youthful mind concerning the necessity of the religion of the heart. At length my father took me with him one evening to hear another Methodist minister, the Rev. Zalmon Lyon, who now rests, I trust, in Abraham's bosom. "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son," &c., was the blessed text on which this good man preached on that occasion. The meeting was at a private house. I suppose there were a few Methodists there from another neighborhood, and some other serious persons, and so the good minister held a class meeting after preaching. My father and myself tarried in the class meeting. This was the first meeting of that kind which either of us had ever attended. Something which I saw, or heard, or felt, in that meeting, led me to say in childish simplicity to my dear mother, when I returned home, "I believe I shall be a Methodist."

Not long after, perhaps the next day, while praying alone to God for his blessing to be communicated to my soul, I trust he answered my prayer. I well remember the place where I prayed. It was in a retired spot, in the open *air*; and it was on a cloudy sabbath morning

when I trust that I was first enabled to rejoice through Christ Jesus in the light of God's reconciled countenance. This occurred when I was between eight and nine years old. After this event my feelings were very different from what they were before, particularly in one respect. Before, I had been exceedingly fond of praise, but after this I was more anxious to please God than to be applauded by man. Before this, some little attempts at composition had been commended by individuals, much to my gratification. But after this I felt desirous to write something which would do good to some one. A letter which I wrote to a cousin, and another to an uncle residing some distance from my father's house, were kindly transcribed by an only sister, a few years older than myself, so as to render them legible to those to whom they were written. The exercise of putting my thoughts on paper was a pleasing employment to me in those days.


In the course of that year Rev. N. W. Thomas and Rev. Jonathan Lyon were sent to that circuit. Mr. Thomas, in company with Rev. Aaron Sanford, (a local preacher, residing in Reading, about fourteen miles distant,) called at my father's house, took dinner, offered up prayer, and left an appointment for Mr. L. to preach.

It would seem from Dr. Bangs' History of the Methodist Episcopal Church, vol. i, p. 292, that Mr. Sanford was the first man who united with the Methodists in New-England. He, Mr. Thomas, and Mr. Lyon, are yet living, while multitudes, whom they have been instrumental in gathering into the church of Christ, have gone before them to the fields of the blessed. Mr. Lyon came at the appointed time, and preached, I think, from these words, "This man receiveth sinners." At this meeting, for the first time in a public assembly, I kneeled during prayer. This I did from a sense of duty, for I had read those passages in the Bible which speak of this posture of devotion as practiced by ancient saints, as well as the invitation to "bow down and kneel before the Lord our Maker." Conscientiously, therefore, did I worship in this manner, while my father, mother, brother, and sister, continued to stand, according to their former custom. Once in two weeks Mr. T. and Mr. L. preached at my father's house on Saturday evening; and after the lapse of five or six months, both of my parents, my only brother, my only sister, and myself, offered ourselves for membership to the Methodist Episcopal Church, and were admitted on probation by *the Rev. Mr. Lyon.*

In the course of that summer I often rode with my father about seven miles on sabbath-day to hear the gospel preached in a small Methodist church, called *Lee's Chapel*. This name was given to it in honor of Jesse Lee, who may be called the apostle of New-England Methodism. This building was the first Methodist church erected in New-England. Well do I remember that small, plain building, as well as the first love-feast which I ever attended. It was in the summer of 1808, and was held in Lee's Chapel. The house was full, not only of people, but, as it seemed to me, of the glory of God. One of the ministers, who is still living, and a member of the New-York Conference, was so overwhelmed with the presence of God, that for a time his bodily strength departed from him. To my soul it was a solemn and joyful occasion. Many were the seasons of religious enjoyment which I also had in private prayer. But sometimes, through unfaithfulness, and at other times by the temptations of the enemy, I was cast down in my feelings. The following passage of Scripture made a lasting impression on my mind: "Whether therefore ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God." *But while I rejoice that I read these words with so much interest, and while I mourn*

that I have not been more careful to act accordingly, I am sensible that, through the weakness of my childhood, I had some very mistaken notions about my duty, which in some cases produced needless solicitude.

Being very fond of study and reading, and going to school most of the time, my health was probably in some measure affected, and this may have had some effect in depressing my spirits. Yet I was not confined to my room by illness, except in a few cases, and for a very short time. Some of my father's acquaintances, however, supposed that my life would be very short. But while I am writing I can adopt the language of Caleb, (see Josh. xiv, 10,) "The Lord hath kept me alive these forty and five years." Doubtless he has seen fit to preserve me that I may labor to do good. But ah! how feeble have my efforts been! Among the books which I read before I was twelve years old were the following:—Edwards's History of Redemption, Haweis's Church History, one volume of Wesley's Sermons, Simpson's Plea for Religion, Fletcher's Appeal, Memoirs of Mrs. Rogers, Lackington's Confessions, Life of Dr. Samuel Johnson, one volume of Robertson's History of America, a volume of the Spectator, Dr. Young's



ht Thoughts, Mrs. Rowe's Devout Exercises
he Heart.

Several of these books were purchased by my
er of the Methodist ministers who preach-
on that circuit, and some of them were bor-
ed of my father's neighbors. A number of
se books were of a decidedly religious tend-
y. I have reason to thank God for the deep
lasting impressions made on my mind
ugh their instrumentality; and I have no
bt much good has been done through the
ks which the Methodist itinerants have scat-
d through the land.

n the year 1809 Billy Hibbard and Isaac
dee were appointed to our circuit, which
raced the whole of Fairfield county. Now,
at county there are about fifteen ministers of
Methodist E. Church employed, so that there
a far greater amount of stated ministerial
or, and especially of sabbath labor, enjoyed
r, than in former days. "Where much is
en, much is required." Mr. Hibbard was a
y eccentric man, but a very devoted minis-
of Christ. His manner of speaking, his
ures, and the appearance of his countenance,
e so singular, that I often gazed upon him
a deep interest while he was speaking. Soon

after he came on the circuit a camp meeting was held within the bounds of the circuit, at Stamford, about eighteen miles from my father's house. We all felt a great desire to be present, at least a part of the time. I will not disguise the fact that some curiosity mingled with my desire for spiritual benefit. I had heard much of these meetings; much was said for and against them, and I wished to see for myself. Glad was I when I learned that my father had made arrangements with a neighbor of his to go with him in the same wagon to the camp meeting. Accordingly, about two o'clock in the morning of Thursday, the neighbor and his wife, together with my father, mother, sister, and myself, set out for the tented grove. It was a little after sunrise when we arrived within hearing of the mingled sounds of prayer and praise which ascended from different parts of the encampment. Probably it was a time when a large number of the friends on the ground were engaged in family devotion. Such a combination of voices sounded strangely in our ears. The man who was with us, a stout, athletic farmer, when inquired of, whether the peculiar appearance of his countenance arose from fear, acknowledged that he *was* a little frightened. *We soon ventured within the inclosure of the*

ents, and shortly met with some Christian friends, whose kindness tended much to make us feel at home. About ten o'clock A. M. the congregation was called to the stand, and I listened to the first sermon which I ever heard at a camp meeting. It was from these words: "Thine eyes shall see the King in his beauty; they shall behold the land that is very far off." In the afternoon another minister preached from this passage: "As for this sect, we know it is everywhere spoken against." In the evening another spoke from these words: "One thing I know, whereas I was once blind, now I see." These three ministers now slumber in the silent tomb, and no doubt a large proportion of the vast assembly who listened to them on that occasion have also gone to the eternal world. Earnest were the prayers of Christians, and great the joy which many of them experienced at that meeting, while many professed to find the Saviour's love. On Friday morning the last sermon at this meeting was preached from these words: "When He, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth." This discourse was delivered with great solemnity by a minister who is still living, Rev. Aaron Hunt. He was then the presiding elder of a neighboring district. This was the first time that I

ever saw him. Little did I think when a child nine years old, listening to that sermon, that thirteen years afterward he would give his vote to license *me* as a preacher of the gospel. Mr. H. told me at the session of the New-York Conference in 1845, that Long Island was his first circuit, and that he traveled in company with Dr. W. Phœbus, having been called out by the presiding elder, probably in the year 1790. Long Island was then but one circuit, and their only preaching place in Brooklyn was a private dwelling. Now there are five or six Methodist churches in that city, and there are thirty-two traveling preachers laboring on Long Island. But to return. After singing a farewell hymn from the stand, the camp meeting closed, and we returned home. Twelve years elapsed before I went to another: not that I lacked the inclination, but circumstances rendered it impracticable.

Mr. Candee, one of our circuit preachers, was a man in feeble health, and such was the nature of his complaint that it affected his nerves, and made him think that he was more feeble, and his situation more dangerous, than was really the case. In short, he was greatly afflicted with hypochondria; yet, when he could be prevailed *upon to preach*, he was generally very fer-

vent, and I believe often successful in winning souls to Christ. It was either in consequence of his illness, or because he was called elsewhere, that a young man was sent to the circuit by the presiding elder, to labor with Mr. Hibbard. This young man was Arnold Scholefield, who afterward became eminently acceptable and useful. Indeed, during the three months which he was employed on that circuit, he was much beloved by the people. I recollect that on a sabbath morning, (when he had sat down at my father's table to breakfast,) in religious conversation, my father and Mr. S. soon became so happy as to prevent them from eating their breakfast. But I may speak of him more hereafter.

It was about this time that my father had a very extraordinary exercise of mind, which occurred one evening, and which had a most powerful and singular effect on his body. Father Hibbard preached that evening, at my father's house. After the sermon, a class meeting was held, in which the power of God fell upon my father in a wonderful manner. He had long desired, I believe, to obtain the blessing of entire sanctification, and that evening he thought he received it. *He fell from the chair upon the floor, and, for a time, the struggle appeared to*

be severe; but he did not seek in vain. Yet he was assailed by some distressing temptations shortly afterward, and it is possible that he, for a time, lost the blessing which he then received: but I trust that he afterward regained it; and I hope that he is now rejoicing in a world of unchangeable holiness. In the spring of 1810, Nathan Emery and John Russell were sent to the Reading circuit, which included the place where my father resided. The former is now living, (1846,) I believe, in Ohio, and Mr. Russell is, I trust, living in paradise. He was the son of the pious and venerable Abraham Russell, of New-York, who was long known as a liberal and useful member of the Methodist Episcopal Church. At the time when John entered the ministry, in the year 1810, his father was in wealthy circumstances; and the privations of the itinerant were then probably far greater than they are at present. But John cheerfully consented to forego all the comforts of a kind father's house, and went forth among strangers to seek the lost sheep of the house of Israel, and to lead sinners to God. He was very kind and affectionate, and at the same time serious and studious. I well remember that the first copy of any part of Dr. Adam Clarke's *Commentary* which I ever saw, was brought

to my father's house by Mr. R. I was then between ten and eleven years of age, and was very thankful for the privilege of reading it occasionally. At one time, when he laid it down to step out of the room, I became so interested in it, that when he returned I forgot that he might want it, until he, in a very gentle manner, asked me for it. The preachers who preached at my father's house commonly spent the night and a part of two days with us; and I looked forward with much interest to the appointed time for Mr. R. to arrive, that I might have a glimpse now and then at his Commentary. But his season of toil and trial was short. It was only about two years after he left Reading circuit, when he was called to his heavenly home.

During this conference year, the Lord graciously revived his work in our neighborhood, and my father's house was honored with the awakening and conversion of souls. At one time, when Mr. Emery preached, the Rev. David Austin,* who was at the time preaching in that vicinity, gave an exhortation after the sermon, and then Mr. E. kneeled down to offer the con-

* This minister was celebrated for his talents, eloquence, zeal, and eccentricities. He labored among the Presbyterians and Congregationalists.

cluding prayer. During this prayer, one or two individuals began to cry for mercy, and the meeting was changed into a prayer meeting, and it was a season long to be remembered.

Among the instruments employed by the Lord in this revival was Thomas Thorp, at that time a young school teacher, who commenced teaching a district school, in our neighborhood, where I received instruction. When a thoughtless young man, he was awakened through the personal conversation of Rev. M. Richardson, then just commencing his ministerial career. Lodging one night in the same room with him, Mr. R. invited the youth to Christ. Mr. T. was pious, labored zealously for his God, and I believe received license to exhort a few weeks after he came to our neighborhood ; and, within two years from that time, he was licensed to preach, and admitted into the traveling connection. He made rapid advancement in the studies suitable to a young minister, and became, in a very few years, a very acceptable preacher. In 1818 he was stationed in the city of New-York, and in 1819 he died.

Another young man, an exhorter, who frequently held meetings at my father's house in those days, was Alfred Bronson, who has since *been a presiding elder* in a western conference,

and has labored as a missionary in the far northwest. In the spring of 1811 our circuit was made a six-weeks' circuit, and A. Hunt, O. Sykes, and J. Reynolds, were appointed as our preachers. Although thirty-four years have passed away since that time, and multitudes of our ministers have gone into the eternal world, these three fathers in Israel are still living, and all of them yet able occasionally to preach Jesus to their fellow-men.* This year I was led to seek for more religion. The holy, prayerful example of one of those ministers, especially, was rendered a means of exciting a strong desire for higher degrees of holiness. Some seasons of social prayer, which he and my dear parents enjoyed in my father's house, will long remain fresh in my recollection. Our presiding elder at this time was William Anson, who had traveled on our circuit (Reading) a few years before, and whose memory was dear to many in our vicinity. The remarks which I heard from those who had known him, made me anxious to hear him. This opportunity I enjoyed at length, at a quarterly meeting held in the new meeting-house in Weston, which had been erected in the place of "*Lee Chapel*," to which

** Since the above was written, Mr. Reynolds has been suddenly called to his reward.*

allusion has already been made. Whenever had been to quarterly meeting before, I only enjoyed the privileges of the sabbath; but on this occasion I went on Saturday, heard the sermon, and went to one of the prayer meetings on Saturday evening. In those days "many came from far," on these occasions; sometimes, perhaps one or two hundred persons from other parts of the circuit were entertained on Saturday night among the friends in the place where the quarterly meeting was held. The prayer meetings were generally held at from three to six different places on the Saturday evening, and sometimes were seasons of great interest and mercy. In the love-feast, on sabbath morning, it was quite common to hear several individuals speak, with glad hearts and streaming eyes, of the blessings conferred on them in the meetings of the previous evening. The distance of most of the quarterly meetings from my father's house made it inconvenient for me to attend very often, and the privilege, was embraced with great avidity whenever it was practicable. In the early part of the summer of 1812 new preachers were sent to the circuit. Their names were Seth Crowell, Coles Carpenter, and Gilbert Lyon. Mr. Crowell, I *have already mentioned*, as being the first min-

of the Methodist Church that I ever saw. It was my joy when I heard that he was invited to our circuit, and the sermons which he preached from him made a deep impression on my mind. Some of the texts from which he preached were these:—Matt. xxv, 46; 1 John i, 9; Isa. lxvi, 6; and Psa. cxix, 1. But such was the feeble state of his nervous system, and the severe labors and exposure of forty years, that he was not able to perform a great amount of labor during the year. It was delightful to me to listen to his narratives of his life through which he had passed, when he was preaching Jesus in the wilds of Canada. I distinctly remember one evening, which was very much occupied in relating his travels, trials, and successes in the ministry. Just before he was about to rest, he turned to me, who was the youngest person present, and addressed a few words of religious conversation, which immediately melted my heart, and I burst into tears.

How much good might ministers do, by visiting in a friendly manner, personally, to the children in the families where they visit! From the lips of Mr. Crowell I received the information concerning that holy man of God, H. C. Wooster, who had preceded Mr. C. as a missionary in Canada, and whose name

among that people "was as ointment poure~~d~~^s forth."

One of his colleagues, Mr. Carpenter, was~~d~~ much younger in the ministry than Mr. Crowell = but they have both gone to the eternal world, and I fully believe to the home of the blessed. Mr. Carpenter was very pathetic and impressive in exhortation and in hortatory discourses, but seldom took up those controverted topics which were so ably handled by his senior colleague. Neither did he, like him, frequently pour out the terrors of the law in overwhelming torrents upon the unconverted, being rather a "son of consolation," than a "son of thunder." Some of his descriptions of the glories and joys of the heavenly land are still so distinctly remembered by me, that I can almost fancy that I hear his melodious voice yet sounding in my ears. God grant that I and my family, with every member of his family, may meet him in that "land of pure delight."

Before the conference year had closed, the health of Mr. Crowell became so impaired, that the presiding elder of the district thought proper to employ Jabez Tredwell, a worthy young local preacher, to fill his place. He was warm in his Master's cause, and labored very acceptably on the circuit till conference. Then he


was received as a probationer in the itinerancy, and appointed to a circuit in the Genesee Conference. During his second year of labor he was attacked with disease, and died, shouting "Glory to God." This was the happy and glorious end of one who sought the Lord and obtained mercy when he was about seven years old, and I believe continued faithful through the whole course of his pilgrimage. May the youth, who read this account, seek the Lord *now* in the morning of life.

The presiding elder who employed Mr. Tredwell to fill the vacancy on the circuit was the Rev. Elijah Woolsey, who is still living, waiting for a call to go and join those who have gone before him to the land of rest. I believe Mr. Woolsey, when he traveled on Reading circuit, some years before, was the instrument of the awakening of Mr. Tredwell's mother.

In the spring of 1813 A. Hunt was sent to our circuit again, and with him an old soldier of the cross, who is still living, by the name of Henry Eames. He was the son of an Irish Methodist, who immigrated to America, I believe, before the Revolution, and who was acquainted, in Ireland, with Mr. Wesley. A letter to him from Mr. W. is to be found in Wesley's Works, *vol. vii, p. 99*. I remember to have seen the

old man with his white locks, in 1811, rise in love-feast, which was held in a barn, to witness for the Saviour whom he loved. If I mistake not, his son Henry was converted when about twelve years old, and commenced his labors as an itinerant minister in the year 1800. This minister had recently lost, by death, a pious, useful, and beloved companion. In subsequent years, while traveling in sections of country where they formerly resided, I have often heard her piety, prayers, and efforts for the salvation of souls, spoken of with gratitude. Her bereaved husband often carried copies of her religious letters to her friends with him, and read them to the families where he was entertained. Thus, "being dead she yet" spoke to many whom she had never seen on earth, some of whom, however, love to think of meeting her in glory. To encourage pious parents to pray for the conversion and usefulness of their children, and to comfort those who may be called by death away from their children, while they are yet young, I will observe, that a dear son of Mrs. E., who was but twelve or fourteen years of age when his mother died, is, and has been for many years, a useful minister of the Troy Conference.

In this year (1813) I first saw and heard a




minister, who is still living, and whose influence has been extensively felt in our church, I mean Nathan Bangs. An aged sister by the name of Wells, who lived about eight miles from my father's, (and who was one of those persons who composed the first class formed by Jesse Lee after commencing his labors in New-England,) was visiting at our house, just after conference, and mentioned that our new presiding elder, brother Bangs, was a good little boy when she knew him in the days of his childhood. When I first saw him, it was at a love-feast held in Josiah Gregory's barn, in Poplar Plains. My curiosity had been much excited by the conversation of Mrs. Wells, and my first feeling, when he commenced reading the hymn, was one of disappointment on account of the lowness of his voice. I feared he would not be able to make us hear the whole of his discourse. But my fears were soon removed. The love-feast was good, and, after it closed, the congregation adjourned to a grove near by, on a gentle declivity. A large farm wagon served as a pulpit, and the presiding elder preached from, "Ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ," &c. We *felt* as well as heard the word of truth. After the sermon was closed, a venerable man rose and read the hymn,

"Of Him who did salvation bring,
I could for ever think and sing."

His countenance was florid, and his voice and enunciation were somewhat peculiar. But there was something heavenly in his manner and appearance. He was an English Methodist preacher of the name of Blagborne, who spent two or three years laboring in America. He preached a good sermon from 1 John ii, 2, and presented our great Advocate in a most impressive manner to our view. He returned to England, and in a few years died suddenly, and no doubt went to rest. In the fifteenth chapter of that excellent biography, "The Life of Bramwell," we find him making this remark, just before his own sudden death: "O the blessed—blessed state of that holy man of God, Mr. Blagborne, when he was about to depart. I saw him in London a short time prior to his death, when he exclaimed, with great joy, 'Glory, glory be to God, who hath made me fully ready for my change!'" How desirable for all is such a state of mind!

Among the books which I read about this time was Law's Serious Call to a Holy Life, which very deeply impressed my mind with a sense of the importance of being continually *devoted to God, and of laboring to be as holy as*



I possibly could. Having been informed that this book was very useful to Mr. Wesley when young, I perused it with great attention, and I trust with profit. This book of itself, however, would not have set before me as clearly as was necessary the privilege of a full salvation by faith in Christ. Two other publications, which fell into my hands about this time, were well calculated to present that blessed privilege. These were Mr. Fletcher's Last Check to Antinomianism, and particularly his address to imperfect believers, and the letters of that holy woman, Mrs. Hester A. Rogers. The former of these books was kindly lent to me by our preacher, brother Eames, and the latter was lent to my dear mother, by another pious friend. She had long been seeking perfect love with great earnestness, and, through the blessing of God upon this little book, was enabled to take hold, by faith, on the exceeding great and precious promises of the gospel. Did not that circumstance heighten the joy and increase the fellowship of Mrs. Rogers and my mother when they met, (as we trust they have met,) in the fields of the blessed?

My own soul was led to seek earnestly, and pray much, for the blessing of entire sanctification, and I endeavored to seek it by faith. And

although I was but a youth, not quite fourteen years old, I cannot help thinking that then I was enabled to love God with all my heart, and though the blessing which I received was retained in its fullness but a very short season at that time, yet its remembrance is precious to my soul. I fear that during the greater part of the time since then I have loved God but imperfectly ; but I am thankful for that renewing and restoration which at different times I have received through faith in the blood of the covenant. I should have said that not long previous to these exercises my mind had been strongly tempted to the love of money, and various schemes had presented themselves to me for the future acquisition of wealth. And I felt sensibly that my heart was too prone to depart from the living God. Had it not been for the restraining grace and kind providence of God, I know not how far I might have been led into sins resulting from avarice. I feel that in this respect, as well as in others, I am greatly indebted to grace.

In those days, also, I found it necessary to watch against the amusements of youth, which had a tendency to draw my heart away from God. Some of Mr. Wesley's remarks on the *subject of amusements*, particularly in his ser-

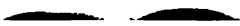
mon on the "more excellent way," were very useful to me. In 1814 Ebenezer Washburn and Reuben Harris came on our circuit to labor. The former has, within a few years, given several interesting reminiscences of his life to the readers of the Christian Advocate and Journal; and though he has removed far west to the Wisconsin Territory, he still lives in the warm affections of many, very many, of his Christian friends in the Atlantic states. May his old age be sweetened by the presence of God and the kindness of man! Brother Harris also removed to Ohio a few years since, and died when on a journey in a part of the state remote from his residence, having preached his last sermon (but a few days before his death) among strangers, on this text:—"Let us go on to perfection."

In the course of the year some difficulty arose between my father and another class-leader in the society, which had an unfavorable influence on my father's mind, in some degree, for several years. This was a cause of grief to his family, to the preachers, and to his brethren and sisters generally. At one time he told me that he thought he should withdraw from the Methodist Church, but did not speak of uniting with any other. This grieved my heart, and I used the strongest arguments I could to

prevent such a step, and I thank God that step was never taken. My dear father lived twelve years longer, a member of the Methodist Episcopal Church : many happy meetings were held under his roof during that time ; and at length I heard him praise God on his dying bed. How many have rashly cut themselves off from the society of the church, to their great injury ! The brother with whom he differed, I thought, was a good man ; but if Satan could have led two good men into such a controversy as would have led to the separation of one or both of them from the church, his malicious designs would have been accomplished, especially, if either of them had lost his soul through his folly.

This year, a good man by the name of Moses Betts was appointed leader of our class. He was rather prone to doubts and fears, but the example which he set us of steadfastness in duty, and attendance upon the means of grace, together with the advice which he gave me, shed a beneficial influence on my mind. After faithfully performing his duty as a class-leader, amidst several discouraging circumstances, for nearly four years, he was called from the field of toil on earth to the heavenly rest above.

The house of Peter Jennings, about two miles from my residence, was a place where the society




often met to worship God, there being no Methodist church at that time within seven miles of us. In brother Jennings' house I was often blessed, both in hearing the word preached on week evenings, (and occasionally on the sabbath,) and often in the prayer meetings and class meetings, which were frequently held on the holy day of the Lord. It may interest some persons to learn that, in many parts of my native state, it was customary to have two public services in the daytime on the sabbath, in the same house, even in small country places where the members were few and scattering. In this respect the Methodists there differ in their usages from many of their brethren in the adjoining state of New-York. In several instances, our ministers, who had labored on circuits in the state of New-York, when they came into Connecticut, endeavored to introduce the practice there of having a morning sermon in one society, and then going on to preach in another place three, four, or six miles distant, in the afternoon. These efforts were not made from a regard to their own convenience, for it required more toil: and it is not very pleasant, in a hot summer's day, or in a cold winter's day, after the labor of the morning service, (often including a class meeting,) to ride half a dozen miles

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to preach again. But their object was to meet as many of the pressing calls for *sabbath preaching* as they could. But these efforts to change the custom of the dwellers in the land of *steady habits* were not generally very successful. In many cases the people said they would prefer "*all-day preaching*," as they called it, once in four or even six weeks, to "*half-day preaching*" once in two weeks. It was quite common, in many places, for those who resided two or three miles from the place of worship to carry with them some articles of light food, which they ate between the morning and afternoon meetings, instead of returning home to dinner. Often would you see the husband and son approaching the basket of the good wife and kind mother to receive a supply from the eatables which she had brought with her; while others drew from their own pockets those supplies which they needed for present use. It was my custom to feed the mind, by reading, as well as the body, during those *intermissions*, as they were termed.

It was at brother Jennings' house that I first saw a volume of the Dictionary of the Bible, and its contents, as far as opportunity permitted, I devoured with avidity. The historical facts and information in ancient geography, which I *there found*, were peculiarly interesting. Some



difficult passages of Scripture were also explained to my satisfaction. But, ah! there is always a *but* to everything earthly—this was but half the Dictionary; hence, the remarks on the words beginning with the first half of the letters of the alphabet were not to be found here. But I made the best of what there was. The privilege of looking into this book was, for a time, confined to an hour or two of one day of the week. Great was my joy when told by a young man of my acquaintance, that brother J. had said that he was willing to lend me the book if I wished to borrow it. Without hesitation I accepted the kind offer, bore home my prize, and to this day retain a lively and grateful sense of the kindness of the lender.

It was at his house, and in one of those sabbath *intermissions*, that I first perused the delightful narrative of *The Dairyman's Daughter*, which drew tears from my eyes, (as I doubt not it has from the eyes of tens of thousands,) and led me to read other productions of the same writer.

Through the kindness of brother J. and his family, I enjoyed, in the same way, the first opportunity which I ever had of reading N. Bangs' book, entitled "*Errors of Hopkinsianism*," and *some other books*, which made a deep impres-

sion on my mind. Though I had discontinued attending school, yet my love of study remained; and when a social library was established, about two miles from my father's, I eagerly desired to be a proprietor; but this was not my lot. I often think of the great privileges enjoyed at the present day by the youth in every school district in the great state of New-York. Had I enjoyed access to such a library as may now be found in almost every neighborhood, and been permitted to read the books without money or price, it seems to me that I should have been exceedingly thankful. Of novels I have read scarcely any; but I have seen enough of them to be satisfied that time may be employed to better purpose than in reading them.

Near the close of this conference year (1814-15) a glorious revival of religion took place in the town of Reading. Numbers were powerfully converted to God; and, in the love-feast of the last quarterly meeting held that year, I had the privilege of hearing the testimonies and shouts of several of the young converts, one of whom is now, and has been for years, a faithful minister in the New-York Conference.

In 1815 Elijah Woolsey (who had been our *presiding elder* three years before) was placed

in charge of our circuit. Not having had an opportunity of hearing him while he was our presiding elder, I greatly desired to see and hear him when he commenced his labors among us as a circuit preacher. The first sermon which I heard him preach pleased and profited me much, and I think that I grew in grace more that year than in several other years of my life. The anecdotes which he related in his preaching, mostly circumstances which occurred under his own observation, were calculated to illustrate the goodness, power, and wisdom of God, as well as the workings of human nature. He commenced his labors as an itinerant Methodist preacher in the year 1793, and spent some time in the wilds of Canada, preaching Jesus to poor sinners. Many miles have I traveled, and sometimes through mud and snow, to hear this servant of the Lord publish his Master's gospel. Two things I always expected when I went to hear him. First, to find the meeting begun at an early hour; and secondly, that the meeting would be dismissed in good season, so that I could walk home before a late hour in the night, even when I had three miles or more to walk.

This year I obtained access to the life of Benjamin Abbott. I once heard one of our

bishops (whose mother was awakened under Mr. Abbott's ministry) observe, that though he was a rough, untutored child of nature, yet he possessed so much good common sense, and so much of the power of the Holy Ghost, that he was very useful in the vineyard of the Lord. This simple narrative was a means of exciting me to greater earnestness in the cause of God. And the fact that our minister, brother Woolsey, had been personally acquainted with father A., and confirmed the favorable opinion I had formed of him from reading his book, tended to make the book itself still more useful to me. "The Portraiture of Methodism" fell into my hands about this time, and I was much interested in reading it, especially the biographical notices which I found in it. "The Experience of several Methodist Preachers," written by themselves, at Mr. Wesley's request, was also profitable to my soul. Scarcely any kind of religious books have had so much effect on my heart and conscience as religious biography. In consequence of this, I have been more ready to devote a portion of my time to writing a narrative of the dealings of God with me: for I have observed that even some narratives which were written without any *elegance of style*, and which did not contain any *very remarkable* events, were, nevertheless,

rendered the means, in the Lord's hand, of much benefit to me in spiritual things.

In the course of this year I was somewhat exercised on the subject of a call to the ministry. Some impressions on my mind led me to think that it *might* be my duty, after the lapse of a few years, to stand up as an ambassador of Jesus. But from my earliest childhood I had been afflicted with an impediment in my speech. I had a cleft palate, and the deficiency was so great that my voice sounded unpleasantly to strangers, besides rendering the language hard to be understood by persons not familiar with the sound. Although when a lad not more than nine years of age, I had occasionally prayed in small social circles, when called upon to do so, and once, by request of my teacher, had prayed with the school which I attended, yet it was very rarely that I had taken any part, vocally, in the social meetings of the friends. I excused myself from following some strong impressions concerning duty, by referring, in my own mind, to this unavoidable defect in my power of articulation. This consideration led me to dismiss, as much as possible, the idea of preaching.

About this time a young woman, eminently pious, *removed from Ohio to Wilton, a few miles distant from our residence.* Her name


was Rebecca Noyes, and although she had been very fond of gay and costly apparel, yet, after she turned to the Lord, she was emphatically "clothed with humility." She was not beautiful in the usual acceptation of the term, but her countenance, when lighted up with holy animation, seemed almost angelic. Her testimonies for her Lord in the love-feast, and in the *general prayer meetings*, (in which two or three adjacent societies met together,) were often attended with a powerful and divine influence: I have seen unconverted persons, who were entire strangers to her, melted into tears, in a very few minutes after she commenced speaking or praying. I will here say that she continued faithful, holy, and useful, after her marriage, as well as before, till her triumphant death, about the year 1826. Her Christian course was through great tribulation; but now, I have no doubt, she rejoices with them who "stand before the throne." Her name after her marriage was Mrs. Lobdell, and an interesting account of this holy woman may be found in the *Methodist Magazine*, vol. x, p. 192.

In 1816 Samuel Bushnell was appointed to succeed Mr. Woolsey in the charge of Reading circuit. There was a great contrast in the *natural temperament* of these good men; Mr. W.

being remarkably easy and affable in his manners, in conversation, and animated in his delivery from the beginning of his sermons to the end; while the other was reserved in his intercourse, and slow in the delivery of his public discourses, with but little gesticulation, and scarcely none at all in the former part of his sermon. Some of us were not so well pleased with him at first as we could wish, but before he had completed the term of two years among us, he was very highly esteemed by many. A few short years of labor after he left our circuit terminated his toil.

During this year I was first favored with an opportunity of seeing that eminent servant of the Lord, Samuel Merwin, whose melodious, yet powerful voice, impressive enunciation, and manly form, are still fresh in my recollection. It was at a quarterly meeting in Norwalk, in the first Methodist church ever built in that town, before the church was finished, that I heard him preach for the first time, and it seems but as yesterday, though thirty years have since rolled away. For many years that "house of prayer" has been superseded by another, and Samuel Merwin has gone to the home of Christian pilgrims *above*. A single remark which *Mr. M. made in that love-feast* I will record.


When a blind brother had said, among other things, "Brethren, though I cannot see you, yet by faith I can see Jesus," and then took his seat, the good minister (looking at him very affectionately) observed: "In the resurrection, my brother, you will see as well as any of us." It might have been at the same quarterly meeting that he made the following remark: "When I was stationed in Albany," said he, "I sometimes went into the capitol, and was respectfully invited to a comfortable seat by some member or officer of the house, and listened for a time to the speeches of the learned and able gentlemen engaged in the debate, but I soon grew weary and uninterested, took my hat and retired. But," said he, "I go from one quarterly meeting to another; every sabbath I am in a love-feast, where I hear men, women, and youth, most of whom make no pretension to eloquence or learning, speak in artless language, or broken accents, of God's goodness to them, and it is still interesting, affecting, and, as it were, new to me every sabbath." And often did his expressive countenance show plainly the deep feeling of his heart in listening to the simple testimony of the humble, illiterate child of God. In the course of my travels in different sections of the country, I have met with several of the spiritual



children of Mr. M.; and if these pages should meet the eyes of any of them, let me entreat them to remember "how he exhorted, and comforted, and charged every one of *them* as a father doth his children, that *they* would walk worthy of God who hath called *them* to his kingdom and glory." And it may be possible that this brief notice of the departed ambassador of Christ may be read by an unconverted person who will remember the solemn warnings of Samuel Merwin. If this should be the case, it is my prayer that God would make it the means of leading that person to follow the advice of him who "being dead yet speaketh." I shall have occasion to mention the kindness of this father in Israel, in a subsequent part of my narrative. In Dr. Bangs' History, vol. iv, p. 304, may be found an interesting account of him.

This year (1816) I saw a religious newspaper for the first time. I had seen magazines and monthly religious publications, containing accounts of revivals, as well as essays and discussions on different subjects, but a weekly publication, devoted chiefly to religious intelligence, I had never seen before. This paper was the Religious Intelligencer, published by Nathan Whiting, at *New-Haven*, Connecticut. He was a *Congregationalist*, and some of the articles

which it contained were not exactly suited to my taste, but many other articles which I found were exceedingly interesting and useful to me. The missionary intelligence, especially, gave me enlarged views of the necessity of efforts for the conversion of the world. My mind had been somewhat deeply impressed with this subject, not long before, in reading the journal and letters of Harriet Newell; but the weekly paper had a tendency to increase my sense of the importance of giving and laboring for the salvation of the heathen. In less than thirty years how greatly have religious newspapers been multiplied! What multitudes of them are now circulated through the length and breadth of our land! And although it must be admitted that some harm has been done by improper articles in some of them, yet I am fully satisfied that multitudes are quickened in their religious course, and stirred up to greater diligence by these weekly messengers of mercy. The Christian may be situated in such a place that he may feel as Elijah did, when he exclaimed, "They have thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword, and I, even I only, am left, and they seek my life to take it away." But when the religious newspaper is brought in, *he finds in it an account of a revival in a far*



ant place, where he once resided, or under labors of a minister with whom he was once versant, perhaps one whom he encouraged enter the ministry, and he exclaims, with a : of joy glistening in his eye, "God hath not taken us in our bondage."

While on this subject, let me briefly address editors of religious papers, the persons who te articles for publication in them, and those) *might* write useful communications, but do

. Do the latter consider that to him that weth to do good and doeth it not, to him it in? But perhaps they say, Our communica- is may not be as useful as the compositions others. Let them consider that the editors

expected to select the most useful, and en they shall find, by experiment, that their imunications are generally rejected, it will time enough to refrain from writing short ar- es for the periodical religious press. To

se who *do* write, let me say, Your responsi- ty to God is great. Do not write in a care- ;, indolent, lazy manner. Whatever your ntal energies are, consecrate them to God ; l use them in the best possible manner for good of immortal souls. Some idea, record-

by your *pen*, *may be accompanied by God's sing to the hearts of individuals whom you*


never will see till you meet them in a better world ; and there you may rejoice that your labor has not been in vain in the Lord. To writers for, and editors of, religious papers, I would respectfully say, Never let literary ambition, personal resentment, pecuniary interest, or party feeling, lead you to write any article when you have reason to believe you might write something else which would tend more to promote the glory of God and the good of man.

About this time I felt strong impressions that it was my duty to converse personally with several of my fellow-men on the subject of their souls' salvation : but fearing that I might do harm rather than good, I shrunk from the cross in most instances. Whether this was the cause of the severe trials of mind through which I passed in the winter of 1816-17, I cannot certainly tell ; but I have often thought, while reviewing the scenes of that melancholy season, that a more faithful compliance with the apostle's direction—" Do good to all men "—would have been attended with a greater degree of strength to endure mental trials. But during several weeks my mind was frequently in great heaviness, through manifold temptations, so that at times I feared that I had never known the joys of true religion. At one time I went to hear

bushnell preach ; and after the sermon the
 class were invited to tarry, as usual, for
 meeting. I told Mr. B. in the class meet-
 at I felt as if I was traveling through the
 ness ; it seemed as if the fiery flying ser-
 were all around me. By this I meant
 he tempter harassed me with most tor-
 ng fears. The good man understood my
 ng, and, by language which I shall never
 , encouraged me to trust in the Saviour.
 etimes," said he, "the tempted Christian
 : a man in a pit, from which he cannot
 his escape, till a friend appears on the brink,
 ets down a rope or chain to the sufferer ;
 es hold of it, but, as his friend begins to
 him up, he trembles, and exclaims, 'I'm
 you will let me drop.' 'Hold on,' is the
 'and I will draw you out.'" This went
 heart with great power ; and often have
 words occurred to my mind in subsequent
 many years after Mr. B. had been call-
 rest in Abraham's bosom.
 another time, when I was almost persuaded
 iever that I had been irrevocably doomed
 dition before I had a being, and when
 sponding feelings had begun to benumb
 ul, these words were applied most power-
 to my heart :—"God so loved the world,

that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." "Did God love the world?" thought I: "ah! surely I am one of that world of lost sinners whom God loved. It must be that he is really willing to save me. There can be no dire necessity of my eternal ruin." O how my heart melted within me in view of this blessed passage of holy writ! But it was some time before I was enabled to rejoice again in constant steadfast hope of the glory of God. In view of the mercy which carried me through that season of temptation, I can say, The Lord hath helped me.

In the spring of 1817 the fourth quarterly meeting of the conference year was held in Reading. This was the last year of Rev. N. Bangs' presidency in the district, and of course it was, for the present at least, the last quarterly meeting on the circuit at which we expected to enjoy his labors. Through the rain, which fell plentifully on Saturday, my brother and myself went to the place of meeting, but found a stranger preaching when we entered the house. He was a man apparently about fifty years of age, and, if I rightly recollect, stout built, thick set, with long, flowing hair, and *heavy eyebrows*, and very plain in his dress,



and humble in his appearance. Perhaps it was the smallness of his eyes, which were deeply set in his head, that led me at first to suppose him a blind man. I soon perceived him to be a very pathetic preacher, and one who was filled with the Holy Ghost. Some of the people of God wept, and some shouted. The text appeared to be the latter part of the Lord's prayer, and the peculiar, earnest manner in which he uttered the word "glory," while dwelling upon the latter part of the text, was very striking:—"Now, dear brethren," said he, as he put up a finger to each eye, apparently to wipe away a tear or two, "you will permit me to stop and give God *glory*." My heart was melted, as well as the hearts of others, under the powerful appeals of this man of God. The Rev. A. Hunt, who lived near the church, fell in company with me after the close of the service, as he walked home. Knowing his affability, I inquired the name of the minister who had preached to us. "That was Bishop George," was his reply. Of this I had not the remotest idea before; but I was highly delighted to find that, although Asbury was dead, yet the church had been enabled to select as a successor one so apostolic in his spirit, and so earnest in his Master's work.

On the next morning, which was clear and

beautiful, I went to the love-feast: the good bishop was there; and, what seemed remarkable to me, did not, to my recollection, open his eyes from the time the brethren commenced speaking till the last one had spoken. With his head resting against a pillar, he continued silent, and almost motionless, during the whole of that time: but doubtless his heart was lifted up to God in prayer and praise, for, when the love-feast was closed, and he ascended the pulpit and commenced the public services, he spoke like a man anointed from on high. His sermon on sabbath was equally impressive with the one preached on the day previous. Near the close of his discourse he made a most touching allusion to the dying words of Jesse Lee, who had a few months before closed his life in Virginia.

In the place where we were worshipping the second class of Methodists in New-England was formed by Mr. Lee, about twenty-seven years previous. The first male member of that class (Rev. A. Sandford) was present, and several others who had been added to the church soon after Mr. S., besides many who had heard their parents and friends speak affectionately of Mr. Lee. And when the bishop repeated the following expression of the good man on his death

bed :—"Tell all my old friends that I am going to glory,"* the whole congregation seemed to be moved as trees by a mighty wind. I took up this morning† an old magazine of October, 1828, and accidentally opened to the account of the death of Bishop George, written a short time after it occurred. Truly, the same blessed Jesus who was with one, went with the other of these holy men through the dark valley of the shadow of death. Other circumstances concerning this good man may be mentioned hereafter.

This unpretending narrative may be read by some lover of Christ, and of public worship, who may be providentially detained from the house of prayer, while the rest of the family have gone to the house of the Lord. Let me say to such, this was several times the case with me in the years 1814-15-16-17. It was always a great trial to me to be thus situated, even for a single sabbath; but I have often found, in such circumstances, the Lord was able and willing to bless my soul abundantly. And I must be permitted to hope that this statement may encourage such a person to look unto Him who

* If my recollection be correct, these were the words which the *bishop repeated*.

† *April 28, 1846.*

“ Besides everywhere,
And can in all places give answer to prayer.”


I believe it was in the latter part of the year 1817 that a superannuated preacher, by the name of James Coleman, first preached at my father's house. His deep piety and simplicity pleased me; his recital of events and scenes which transpired in the early days of Methodism interested me; his preaching benefited me; and his testimony of the goodness of God to his own soul incited me to press after higher attainments in the divine life. Notwithstanding, he had, perhaps unfortunately, acquired a habit of making frequent long pauses between sentences in the commencement of his sermon. When I first heard the good man preach I was alarmed at these pauses, fearing that he was becoming so embarrassed that he would be constrained to stop entirely; but as he progressed he became more ready in his utterance, and my fears gave place to emotions of another kind. The subject of entire sanctification was one on which he delighted to dwell. He commenced his itinerant career in 1791, on a circuit near Pittsburgh, in a country which I suppose was then almost a wilderness. He spent a great part of his time, while he was able to travel, in those sections of *the work where there was much labor and but*

scanty support: but his work is with his God, and his reward is with the Most High.* Two or three years since he died in Ridgefield, Connecticut, and left a world of sorrow for the land of rest. May I meet his happy spirit in the realms above!

In the year 1818 my mind was much drawn out in prayer for the spread of pure religion, and I was often filled with astonishment at the indifference and inactivity of many professing Christians. In November, of that year, I went to visit a brother in the flesh, who resided twelve or fourteen miles from my father's house. A severe rain storm detained me two or three days longer than I expected. On the last evening which I spent there, one or two Christian friends came in: we united in prayer and praise: the Holy Ghost came down upon us, and I was more powerfully overwhelmed with a sense of the worth of immortal spirits than ever before. My brother's little son, sleeping

* A minister of another church in the state of ———, once said to Mr. C., "You Methodists can do nothing *here*; we have our colleges, academies, and regular parishes; you can do nothing *here*." Mr. C., rubbing his hands together, and looking upward, (as he often did in religious exercises,) replied, "*We believe in perseverance.*" He lived to see about 15,000 communicants in the M. Church in that small state.

in an adjoining room, hearing the strong cries which powerful emotions almost compelled me to pour forth, and awakened by the sound, was brought into the room to be quieted. The moment my eyes beheld him I felt such a spirit of prayer for the little child as I could not then express, and cannot now describe. That child gladdened the hearts of his praying parents by seeking religion about seven years after that time. He afterward became a minister, and has been for about twelve years preaching Jesus to his fellow-men. Next day I returned home, and began more frequently to take an active part in religious meetings. Occasionally I prayed in small social circles, and God blessed me, in some instances abundantly, in so doing, with a sense of his approbation. With much trembling I sometimes rose to speak a word of exhortation ; and in this, too, I felt at times a very clear sense of God's presence ; yet, as the apostle speaks against the use of an unknown tongue in the church, I remained silent in the house of prayer on account of my impediment : for, although I had good reason to believe that most of my words were understood by the greater part of those who were present, yet I feared I might occupy time that would be more usefully employed by others : and had not my brethren en-




couraged me, and frequently called on me to speak or pray, (though it was not customary for them to do so with regard to each other in general,) I might soon have relapsed into my former habits of silence. Whether it was a belief that my speaking would conduce to my own welfare, or because they thought it *might* be useful to others, or both, I cannot tell, but the encouragement which my feeble efforts received from the brethren in Greenfield and Greenfarms makes me feel very grateful to them even to this day. Some of those brethren and sisters are yet living, but several of them have gone to worship before the throne. Among the latter I must be permitted to mention the names of Bradford Craft, who was a local preacher, Peter Jennings, and his brother Joshua, all of precious memory, who, with others of their pious associates, have finished their course, and are now resting from their labors.

Wesley's Sermons were then printed in nine small volumes, one of which, and the Saints' Everlasting Rest, fell into my hands about this time, through the kindness of the owners, who lent them to me. The former contained discourses on our Lord's sermon on the mount, which deeply impressed my mind; and some portions of the latter powerfully excited me to

diligence in laboring to persuade my fellow-men to seek the "*everlasting rest*." Much good may be done merely by lending useful books; yet some object to this on account of the danger of losing them through the carelessness of borrowers. But if those who lend them would keep a little memorandum-book, and make a minute of every book lent, this might be in a great measure prevented.

In the early part of the year 1819 I was led to inquire whether it might not be my duty to offer my services to the church as an ambassador of Christ: but my unworthiness and insufficiency seemed too great to admit such a thought. I did not feel my mind so much drawn out to any particular mode of religious discourse, as I did to giving my whole time and energies to the work of recommending Jesus and his religion to my fellow-men. I passed through many seasons of painfully anxious deliberation on this subject, while my diffidence prevented me from opening my mind to any human being on the subject. My impressions of the duty of going from house to house, to warn and invite men, also returned upon me. Sometimes in my lonely walks of meditation in the fields by moonlight, or starlight, like Jeremiah, I exclaimed, "*Ah! Lord God, behold I cannot speak, for I am a*



" Yet I continued occasionally to open my mouth for the Lord, in short exhortations, and was blessed in so doing.

In the year 1820 Laban Clark and Phineas traveled our circuit. I shall never forget impressions made on my mind by a sermon preached by Mr. Cook from "The Lord will do;" and another sermon by Mr. Clark, 1 Thess. i, 5: "For our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance; as know what manner of men we were among you for your sake." Under each of these ser-

mons my heart was much affected, and I was encouraged to "trust in the Lord, and do good." The Methodist Magazine, which was commenced in 1818, contained many articles which had a tendency to increase my zeal for the cause. The "Short Sketches of Revivals of Religion in the Western Country," published in several successive numbers, were especially dear to me. I also formed an acquaintance with three young men, who, like myself, were engaged to exhort sinners to come to Christ, though they are now scattered abroad, and far asunder from each other and from me, but the happy seasons which we enjoyed are fresh in my mind, and pleasing to my re-

collection. Their names are Stephen Remington, Moses Hill, and W. H. Dikeman.

Feeling a desire to hold meetings in some adjacent neighborhoods, where the door was open, and not wishing to go beyond the bounds of propriety as a private member of the church, I asked for license to exhort. It was one of the heaviest crosses which I ever took up in my life, to speak to the preacher in private on this subject. Nothing but a sense of duty could have induced me to do it. The request was, however, readily laid before the class, and, with their consent, Mr. Clark kindly signed my license. I endeavored to improve every opportunity to hold meetings, particularly in neighborhoods where others did not appoint religious meetings.

CHAPTER II.


THE AUTHOR A CLASS-LEADER, EXHORTER,
AND LOCAL PREACHER, 1821-1823.

NOT long after, the preacher called on me to
be in charge of our little class, as the leader
had decided to have a change made. This was a
very heavy cross, as my father and mother were
members of it; but I dared not refuse.
In the spring of 1821, at a quarterly confer-
ence, (the first which I ever attended,) my
duty to exhort was renewed by the Rev. E.
Osburn, the presiding elder. When he in-
quired of me concerning my faith in the doctrines
of the Methodist Episcopal Church, I answered
freely in the affirmative; and when he par-
ticularized concerning some points, the preacher
in charge, fearing, perhaps, that I might sup-
pose the presiding elder was suspicious of my
orthodoxy, observed to him, that he believed
that Mr. O. was a sound Methodist. The pre-
siding elder smilingly replied, "He *was* a few
years ago, *what there was of him*," alluding to
the circumstance that I was but a young boy in
1814, when he was a preacher on the circuit.
At that quarterly conference, also, the presiding
elder urged very faithfully upon every exhorter

and leader present, the duty of laboring with all their might to do good. He also alluded to glorious revivals which were going on in some parts of the district, mentioning the name of Mr. Maffitt as having been very useful in some places. This minister has since been seen and heard in a great many different places in our country, but I think this was the first time I ever heard of him. In the summer following, I had, however, the privilege of hearing this remarkable man, in an "upper room," in the borough of Bridgeport, and of seeing, on that occasion, about fifty or sixty persons present themselves, at one time, for the prayers of the people of God.

About this time I met with an aged gentleman from Ireland who affirmed that he knew Adam Clarke when a boy, and lived near neighbor to his father. He related a circumstance, which, if true, (and perhaps it may be,) will interest the admirers of Dr. Clarke.* After Dr. C. had been long absent from Ireland, and had obtained great eminence, he made a journey thither, went to the house where he dwelt in the days of early youth, and made some in-

* If this be a correct statement, it probably happened in June, 1811. See Dr. Clarke's Life, book vii, pp 140-142.



es about a particular room. The woman e house, not suspecting him to be Dr. C., ed, "That room is said to be the room e the *great* Dr. Clarke used to say his ers." The stranger proposed to enter, but oor woman objected, probably because she ght it was not in decent condition for the leman to enter; but he urged his way in, upon his knees, and offered up fervent, vocal er to the Most High. When he arose, the an was weeping, and the stranger then said, whom *you* call the *great* Dr. Clarke thinks lowly of himself, and I am he."

the years 1821 and 1822, I attended two o meetings on the same ground, at what then called Musketoe Cove, Long Island, t twenty miles from the city of New- . With a number of others, I crossed over sloop to the camp ground, which was near shore. Several circumstances occurred at : camp meetings which I distinctly remem- but cannot assign each one of them to the cular meeting at which it occurred, whether 21, or the following year. What I record, fore, will be without making any particu- istinction between the two meetings. ere, for the first time, I saw Joshua Soule, a *bishop of the Methodist E. Church,*

P. P. Sandford, who has recently been one of the book agents of our church, William Thacher, of whom I heard as a presiding elder when I was a little boy, and who took charge of the first camp meeting held north of the city of New-York, Heman Bangs, Marvin Richardson, Stephen Martindale, and Lewis Pease, all of whom have since been called, in different districts, to take charge of their brethren in the ministry, and one of whom (Mr. Pease) now sleeps in Jesus. Here, too, I first saw and heard John J. Matthias, who has repeatedly been called to act in the same important relation to the church, and William Ross, who soon after that meeting finished his work. Of those living I must be sparing of my remarks, however highly I may esteem them ; but of the departed I may speak with more freedom.

How pathetically did Mr. Pease, at one of those meetings, address us on the prayer of the publican, and with what solemnity did he preach at the other meeting, from the words of the Psalmist ! " In the hand of the Lord there is a cup, and the wine is red ; it is full of mixture ; and he poureth out of the same : but the dregs thereof, all the wicked of the earth shall wring them out and drink them." *Psa. lxxv, 8.*

Mr. Maffitt's sermon, at one of those meet-

ings, was on the text ending with these words: "Consider this, ye that forget God, lest he tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver." A powerful impression was made on the vast assembly, and, when the preacher sat down, brother Heman Bangs arose, and with a loud, but very solemn voice, exclaimed, "Glory to God." Pausing for a moment amid the responses of many in the congregation, he made the inquiry, "Why?" and then answering his own inquiry, he said, "Because these sinners are out of hell. Now there *is* one to deliver." Soon a large number of weeping mourners collected together to be prayed for by the people of God, and the scenes of that afternoon I shall not soon forget. After the lapse of years, I have met with different individuals, in places remote from each other, who have referred to that camp meeting as the place of their repentance and conversion. Here I saw, for the first time, that father in Israel, and veteran soldier in camp-meeting warfare, Joseph Smith, of New-York, who has since followed his pious son, Rev. John M. Smith, to the land of unending rest.

I also saw one of the good ministers whom I have mentioned so blessed at one of those camp meetings, *that his bodily strength failed him, while he was on the stand*; and many years

afterward, when in conversation with me, he said, "I never shall forget *that* blessed season." He now holds a very responsible place in the church, and has repeatedly filled a seat in her highest council. "Strive to enter in at the strait gate," was the solemn text from which Rev. Mr. Ross addressed us in a most powerful manner. This was the first and only sermon which I ever heard him preach. In about two years from that time he went to his reward. I will observe, that but a few weeks after this, I heard that he had preached a sermon at a camp meeting in Connecticut, which was made the means, in the hands of God, of the awakening of a young woman, who went to that meeting without any special desires for religion, but found the Saviour before its close. That was the first camp meeting she ever attended, and at her first arrival she could hardly conceal her dissatisfaction with the proceedings of the meeting, but prejudice gave way to conviction, and she returned home rejoicing. At that time I had never seen her, or heard of her, neither was I at that camp meeting; but some years afterward, through the providence of God, an acquaintance was formed, which resulted in our union for life, as fellow-travelers to Mount Zion.


But to return to the camp meeting on Long



Island. An interview occurred between brother N. W. Thomas and myself, which I communicated for publication in the *Child's Magazine*. As some may see this, who have not seen that, I will repeat it here. Mr. T. closed the exercises by prayer, at the stand, on the first evening after my arrival. I had not seen him since I was about nine years old, and now I was about twenty-one. I resolved to embrace the first opportunity of speaking to him, as he had often preached at my father's house. Perhaps it was the next day, that, seeing him standing near a tent, I ventured to approach him, and calling him by name, inquired if he recollected preaching at the house of Levi Osborn, in Greenfield, Conn., several years since. He told me that he did. I then inquired if he remembered his youngest son. "Yes," said he; "are you that little boy?" When told that I was, he threw his arms around my neck, lifted up his eyes to heaven, and expressed his surprise and gratification, to meet me in the land of the living, and on my way to glory.

On our return from one of these camp meetings, there were on board of the sloop some very gay, thoughtless young people, who appeared very *unwilling* that we should have *religious exercises on board*. But as this privilege

was usually granted to passengers going to, and returning from, camp meeting, we referred the matter to the captain, who gave his consent, and a very solemn, joyful meeting we had, as the vessel glided over the blue waters. Meantime our thoughtless friends seemed to eye us with a degree of contempt. One young man, especially, I noticed, who manifested much unwillingness to have religious exercises on board. We landed; he went his way, and I went to the house of prayer, where brother Craft preached, and wished me to exhort after him. But a young brother, who had found the Lord but a few months before, was so full of zeal that he arose immediately after the preacher sat down, and with a warm heart, and flowing tears, began to beseech sinners to turn to the Lord. Presently some of them began to weep; we soon commenced a prayer meeting, and three persons, who had not been to the camp meeting, found the Lord that evening. About two weeks after this, being at the place where I landed at our return from the camp meeting, a young man met me, and very kindly extended his hand; I soon perceived it was the young man who was so unwilling to have prayer, praise, and exhortation, on board of the sloop. Without *waiting for me to make any inquiry*, he joyfully



told me the good news, that he had met with a great change, and he now felt it to be a privilege, rather than a hardship, to unite with Christians in worshipping the God of love.

As my exercises on the subject of devoting myself to the work of the ministry continued, I ventured to mention it to brother L. Clark, the preacher in charge, who laid the case before the society, by whom I was recommended as a proper person to be licensed as a local preacher. The district conference, composed of all the local preachers in a presiding elder's district, was then in operation, having been but recently established by the authority of the General Conference. The district conference had authority to license such persons as local preachers as they thought proper, provided they were recommended by the society and the quarterly conference where they belonged. In the quarterly conference I was recommended to the district conference, which was to be held in February, 1822, at Burlington, Connecticut, about forty miles from Reading, where I was residing at this time, with my brother, who employed me for a few months in his shop. Rev. Hawley Sandford, a son of the Rev. Aaron Sandford, whom I have before mentioned, kindly consented to take me in his carriage. Accordingly, on

the morning of the first sabbath in February I started early, walked about three miles to brother Sandford's house, and went with him to a neighborhood in Newtown, where he had an appointment to preach two sermons that day. He was a local preacher, and had formerly been a traveling preacher, and still labored extensively. Perhaps he had as much influence as any other local preacher on the circuit. His conversation with me that morning was serious, friendly, and instructive. I had never formally preached, but he proposed to me to preach for him in the afternoon. Although almost entirely unacquainted with every person in the place, I dared not refuse, and at the close of the morning service he gave notice that I would preach in the afternoon. After a short intermission I preached from Mic. vi, 8, and felt thankful to God for that degree of liberty with which I was favored. We then went to the house of brother Newton Tuttle, a local preacher in the south part of Southbury, where brother S. had an appointment. On our way he requested me to preach in the evening, and again I had cause to thank the Lord that he did not forget me in my weakness. Next morning it snowed; but, as we were yet more than twenty miles from the place where the district conference was to meet, we slowly

pressed our way along, leaving an appointment for brother S. to preach in a place where there was no Methodist society, for the next Friday evening, when he returned. I now began to feel as though I was in a strange land, never having been so far from my father's house before, though I was not yet *very* far from home. We did not reach Burlington that day, on account of the snow, but went through Bethlehem, where we found brother Julius Field, a young traveling preacher, who was laboring on that circuit, and several local preachers on their way to the district conference. One of them preached that evening, and when he sat down I was (very unexpectedly to myself) called upon to exhort. At first I endeavored to excuse myself, but the importunity of the brethren prevailed. Next day we went to Burlington, and arrived just as the conference had closed its session for that day. Some considerable uncertainty rested on my mind in reference to my success in my application for license. The doubtfulness of my succeeding was increased by the consideration that the local preacher best acquainted with me (Mr. B. Craft) was prevented by the storm from coming in season, and only one of those present (Mr. Sandford) had *ever heard me preach*. But I committed my

case to the Lord, knowing that my motive was to please him, and if he saw it best for me not to obtain license, I wished that it might be prevented ; but if it was for his glory, that he would give me favor in the eyes of his servants. The next morning after our arrival I was called before the conference for examination ; Rev. S. Merwin, presiding elder of the district, was chairman. He had no personal acquaintance with me, and when I replied to his first question, he fixed his keen eye upon me very attentively. I learned afterward that when he first heard my singular voice, he thought the brethren on Reading circuit must be almost crazy to recommend such a man for license to preach, for he was absent, in consequence of illness, when the quarterly conference examined and recommended me. Those who have seen him, and remember his piercing eye, can form some idea of my feelings when passing my examination under his searching look. Yet there was no unkindness in his manner. I afterward learned that, when the conference began to deliberate on my case, (after I had retired,) the prevailing opinion at first seemed to be that they could not then give me license, on account of the difficulty in my speech ; but the statements *and arguments* of my good friend brother Sand-

ford prevailed, and I was licensed as a preacher of the gospel. At the same time and place Stephen L. Stillman was licensed to preach. There were two or three other applications which were not successful. On Friday morning brother Sandford told me that the business of the conference would not permit him to leave soon enough to fill the appointment he had left on the way, and he wished me to take his horse and carriage, and go there and preach to the people. Good brother N. Tuttle, one of the oldest local preachers in the conference, happening to be present, encouraged me to go forward, observing, "You must go praying along through the snow," alluding to the unpleasant traveling on wheels while snow was lying on the ground. This good man's words have often come to my mind when I have been riding in similar circumstances, years after he had gone to his rest above. I have never found a better way than to "go praying." Accordingly I started, and, after a tedious journey of about twenty miles, arrived at the house of the person where I was to find entertainment. He was a friend to the Methodist Church, though not a member; and when I informed him for what purpose I had been sent there, he told me plainly that he did *not think it would be best for me to at-*

tempt to preach there, as the people would not understand me, and it would only bring disgrace on the cause. This was the beginning of my efforts after I had received license to preach; but, though trying to my feelings, I soon perceived that it was working for my good. And I will here say that, about eighteen months afterward, that same man very gladly consented for me to preach in the same place. But to return. After the congregation had assembled, just at the time for meeting to commence, Mr. Sandford arrived, in company with two other ministers, and filled his own appointment, much to my satisfaction and that of the people.

Some of my first efforts to preach were in school-houses and private houses, in neighborhoods where there was no regular sabbath preaching. The first instance of awakening which occurred, to my knowledge, through my feeble efforts, was in the town of Weston, a very few weeks after I was licensed. The individual united with another branch of the Christian church, but soon went home to her Father's house on high. In the course of a few months other cases took place, which encouraged me in my Master's work. Among other places where I attempted to preach Jesus, *I went to the house of a good brother in Ridge*

field, Jabez M. Gilbert, who is still living, and whose son is now a minister of the New-York Conference. As there was then no Methodist church in that town, his own house was used for preaching, and some happy seasons have I enjoyed there, both in public meetings and in religious conversation with the good man and his family.


About this time several of my intimate friends were induced to leave the Methodist E. Church, but I have always been thankful that I felt no disposition to follow their example.

My convictions of duty, as to devoting myself *wholly* to the ministry, continuing, I opened my mind, with much trepidation, to a kind father in the ministry, on the subject of applying for admission into the traveling connection. This was about six months after I was licensed to preach. He frankly told me that, in consequence of my impediment, and as so large a proportion of the conference were perfect strangers to me, he thought it very doubtful whether I should be admitted, observing very kindly, at the same time, that if the majority of the conference knew me as well as he and some others did, he thought there would be no difficulty. As I saw no way to perform what I considered to be *duty but to do what I could*, I concluded to

spend my time in preaching, personal religious conversation, and suitable studies, till my little stock of means (not quite one hundred dollars) was exhausted, and then to engage again in manual labor, till I could refit myself with plain, cheap raiment, and then spend another season exclusively in ministerial labors. This was the course I had marked out to pursue, unless the door should open for my entering the regular work as traveling preacher. In the mean time I intended to make the necessary application to the proper authorities for admission, and if I failed, I could but fail.

I found no difficulty in obtaining suitable places for preaching, in different neighborhoods, both on sabbath and week days. But a great trial was at hand. My father, though a Methodist, and I believe a good man, could not see it my duty to spend my whole time in attending meetings. He hired me (as I was out of my minority*) when I was not absent, engaged in preaching, and he wished to continue to hire me. But I felt something of what the apostle expressed when he said, "Wo is me if I preach not the gospel." It was in September, 1822, I think, when my father and myself were labor-

**I had returned from my brother's to my father's house, in the spring of 1822.*




ing in the field together, that I told him of my determination to travel and preach. Never can I forget the reply, which went like a dagger to my heart: "It would be more afflictive to me, my son, to have you do so, than it would for me to follow you to the tomb." But filial affection could not absolve me from what I considered to be the claims of duty to God. Early in October I left my dear father and mother, with an intention to fill some appointments which I had made, and to make other appointments. The feelings of my heart (as I walked along the road, after I had gone a few rods from my father's house) were of the most tender kind, and drew tears from my eyes. But God supported me, and I prayed for my parents, that he would support them also.

A revival had recently commenced in Reading, under the labors of Mr. Maffitt. He had left for some other place, but the work was still going on. I went thither, and was kindly received by both preachers and people. I rejoiced with the young converts, pointed the mourners to Christ, warned sinners to repent, and preached Jesus to the people. After a very few days spent in this manner, I went to other places. In different parts of the towns of Danbury, Ridgefield, Wilton, and North Salem, I preach-

ed, in weakness, the gospel of Christ, and met with more encouragement from the people of God than I had anticipated. In North Salem I fell in with an aged traveling minister who proposed to me that I should fill three or four of his week-day appointments. It was late in the afternoon before he met me at the place where he had appointed to give me the necessary directions. As soon as he had given me these, I started on foot to go a number of miles to the first appointment. I was a stranger to the way, and a part of it was lonely, while another part of it lay through a neighborhood called *Sodom Corner*. As the sun declined low in the west, and I reflected that I was going among a people who neither knew me nor expected me, my heart well nigh sunk within me. But I looked to God for support, and pressed forward. When the labors of the evening were finished, I could praise God for permitting me to bear the cross for my dear Lord and Saviour.

The Rev. Samuel Cochran, who finished his course in May, 1845, was then (1822) preaching in the Reading circuit. At one time he asked me to go to a place to labor, where there was an old, intelligent society. "Do you think I can do any good if I go?" was my inquiry. He answered me by another laconic question



“Do you suppose that God has called you to preach, and you cannot do any good?” This question of his has often occurred to my mind, long since it was asked, when I have been tempted to neglect effort through fear that *I could do no good*. At another time when he met our class, and I spoke something of my temptations, he said, “Elbert, as the devil has troubled you so much by his temptations, if I were in your place, I would do all the injury to his kingdom that I possibly could.”

In the early part of December I applied to the quarterly conference for recommendation to the traveling connection. This was granted, but, as I afterward learned, it was after some hesitation, and with the understanding that the presiding elder should employ me before the annual conference met, so that he might know whether it would answer for him to recommend me as a traveling preacher. I was invited to lodge at the same house where the presiding elder did. He proposed to me to go to Durham circuit, and assist brother Bowen and brother Nixon, a few weeks. He gave me to understand that it would not only be acceptable to the people there, to have the help of a young preacher, but he desired to give me a trial among *strangers*. He informed me that if I could go

to the circuit, he presumed that some brother would willingly lend me a horse to use on the circuit. A few days after this, I left my father's house, not knowing a single person, either preacher or private member, on the circuit.

Such articles as were absolutely necessary I carried in a small bundle, and walked about twenty-six miles, to the city of New-Haven, where I inquired for Elias Gilbert, on whom I had been directed to call by brother Merwin, the presiding elder. When informed who had sent me, and where I was going, he received me kindly. Next day I walked through the snow (which was falling) to Hamden Plains, four miles distant. Here I called on Amos Benham, as directed by brother M., and before night had the privilege of meeting Rev. J. Bowen, and giving him a letter of introduction from the presiding elder. Here, too, I was received with kindness by the family and by the minister, and the next day preached in the afternoon and evening. During the seven weeks following, I preached in Hotchkistown, Bethany, Prospect, Cheshire, Meriden, Southington, Black Rock, Durham, Middlefield, Haddam, Ponsett, and Wallingford; and at some of these places a number of times. One evening I attended a *watch-night* at Hamden Plains, where brother

Merwin and brother Samuel Luckey (then stationed in New-Haven) preached, and where they insisted I should preach also. It was a heavy cross, but the Lord enabled me to bear it. In February, 1823, I went to the district conference at Middlebury, Conn., and here I received a recommendation, from that body, to be received on trial as a traveling preacher. It was here that I first saw and heard that holy, but singular man of God, James P. Horton, of Dutchess county, a local preacher, in whose conversion there had been a mighty display of divine grace.

Here I received directions to go to Amenia circuit in Dutchess county, N. Y., to fill a vacancy for a few weeks. So I returned my horse to the owner, and walked through New-Haven to Stratford, where I arrived on Saturday evening. Here I spent the sabbath, preaching twice myself, and hearing a good sermon from a holy man of God, Mr. Wilcox, a local preacher. He was one of Mr. Merwin's spiritual children, who had been awakened and converted about twenty-one years before, when Mr. M. was but young in the ministry. He, too, has left a world of trial for the home of the blessed. Next day I reached *my father's house*, where I spent a day or two, and then, obtaining the loan of a horse

from a brother, I went to *Amenia*. On the second day I reached the circuit. There was a little misunderstanding on the part of the presiding elder concerning the wishes of the preacher having charge of the circuit, which produced a degree of unpleasant feeling in my mind. On the first sabbath morning after my arrival, when I awoke, looked out of the window, and beheld the house of God where I was to preach that morning to a company of entire strangers, I was ready to wish myself at my father's house, if I could have been there with a good conscience. At the close of the service I felt much more peaceful, yea, I had a measure of joy in Christ. In the afternoon I had an appointment a few miles from the church, in a small house on the side of the mountain. I think it was a log house, the first which I was ever in. Here my soul was still more refreshed, and when, in the evening, I returned to the church to attend a prayer meeting, I found it good, yea, very good, to be there. Next day I felt willing to go to the different places on the circuit, and invite souls to Christ.

Ten weeks I spent on that circuit, and found the people generally kind, and though some of them were wealthy, many, even of them, were *humble*. There had been a very gracious re-

vival on the circuit during the year previous, under the labors of the Rev. Daniel Brayton, who was still laboring among them. When the quarterly meeting came, I inquired of Mr. Merwin whether I had better procure a horse, saddle, bridle, &c., so as to be prepared to go to a circuit when conference closed its session, if I should be received, or whether the probability was so small as not to warrant me in so doing. His reply encouraged me to make the necessary preparations. When the preachers returned from conference, I was informed that I was received on trial, and appointed to Goshen circuit, Litchfield county, Connecticut.

At that time Upper Canada was connected with the M. E. Church in the United States. Before the information from conference arrived, and while I was filling brother Cochran's appointments on Reading circuit, during his absence at conference, my dear mother said to me, "You will not go to Canada if you are appointed there; will you?" But I dared not say that I should decline going even to Canada: for I had said to the presiding elder, "If this conference should be full, so that I am not wanted here, and there are other conferences where my labors are needed, I am willing to go." But *Providence kindly directed me to a field of labor*

less than sixty miles from my native place. I have no doubt that considerable effort was necessary on the part of my presiding elder, and other friends in the conference, to convince a majority of their brethren of the propriety of employing me as an itinerant minister, and my prayer is, that those who voted to admit me among their number may have cause to rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not labored in vain.

CHAPTER III.

TWO YEARS OF PROBATION IN THE ITINERANT MINISTRY—1823, 1824. TWO YEARS ON BURLINGTON CIRCUIT—1825, 1826.


On the 12th of June, 1823, I left my father's house for Goshen. The first night I tarried with brother Tuttle, the local preacher whom I have already mentioned. Next day I went to Goshen, and called on brother T. Munson, a steward of the circuit, whose attachment to the cause of Christ, and steadfastness in the faith of the gospel, have been witnessed by many of the ministers of Christ. The preacher in charge of the circuit was brother Brayton, with whom I had formed an acquaintance in Amenia. The circuit embraced appointments in Goshen, Cornwall, Milton, Litchfield, Sharon, Canaan, Norfolk, Kent, Warren, New-Preston, and New-Milford.

It was but a short time after I went to Goshen circuit, that a young man was awakened under one of my feeble sermons. He had long been the subject of parental prayer, and had a praying wife also. He did not immediately *yield to conviction*, but a short time afterward

was more deeply awakened in hearing brother Merwin. In a few days he went to a camp meeting at Burlington, where (after strong cries and supplications) he was joyfully set at liberty. He now resides hundreds of miles from Goshen, and from my residence also. But a few months since I heard of his continued attachment to the cause of Christ; and a day or two ago the good news reached my ears of the conversion of his son, a student in college. The awakening and conversion of that man, and a few others in different parts of the circuit, encouraged me to continue my efforts in preaching the gospel.

At the camp meeting just mentioned was a holy woman—Elvira Stillman*—with whom, and her amiable companion, I formed an acquaintance. Her simplicity in witnessing for God, her fervor in prayer and praise, her courageous yet prudent manner of warning the lukewarm professor and the careless sinner, have left an indelible impression on my mind. At the same camp meeting I became acquainted with Elisha West and his pious wife, who resided in Burlington. They seemed to take a deep interest in the temporal welfare of the preachers, and were still more solicitous for their

* See an account of this eminent saint in Tract No 95, published by the Methodist Tract Society.



piritual prosperity. To lead the younger ministers nearer to God, and to encourage them to plunge deeper into the divine fullness, was the delight of their hearts. But they have gone to their eternal home ; and "they, being dead, yet speak."

In the east part of Sharon was a grave which I delighted to visit, and around which I loved to linger. It was the grave of Rev. Gad Smith, who died in the year 1817. His course in the ministry was short, but marked by faithfulness and success. In pastoral visiting he was eminently useful. I never saw him, but had heard much of his piety, humility, and zeal. I have been told that when his voice failed, so that he could not speak above a whisper, he would rise in the congregation and address them through a brother, who repeated his words in an audible voice to the people : and, when riding along the road, he would sometimes call the little children, whom he passed, to his side, and talk to them about the love of Jesus. His brother Horatio was a steward and leader on this circuit when I traveled there. His faithfulness in his official duties, his kind hospitality, his regular attendance with his family upon the means of grace, and his *consistency of conduct*, which was *evident to all, have enshrined that good man in*

my affections and in my memory. He was a member of the legislature of the state, first in the lower and afterward in the upper house. But elevation in office did not lead him from the feet of Jesus. One of his sons, who was, perhaps, between ten and fifteen years old when I first knew the family, has since been converted, called to the ministry, blessed in his labors, and taken home to glory, to join his sainted father in the songs of the blessed. I refer to Rev. Gad N. Smith, who died in the city of New-York in 1845. Frequently have I seen him, when a lad, enter the Methodist church in Cornwall, and take his seat by his father, to hear the gospel from my lips. O may I be permitted to sit down with them in the kingdom of God!

In the autumn of the year I was permitted to visit my dear parents, and though one of them had objected so strongly to my entrance into the itinerant ministry, yet they both seemed very glad to see me. On my return, I spent a little time at the district conference held in Reading. Among those licensed to preach on that occasion were Raphael Gilbert, now a superannuated preacher in the New-York Conference, and Charles Sherman, who died in the city of Troy, March 10, 1844. The latter was *the son of Elijah Sherman, of Woodbury, Con-*

necticut. The father was a pattern of plainness in dress and manners, and regularity and zeal in the worship and service of his God. The son, who was licensed to preach when about twenty years of age, and who entered the traveling connection about seven years afterward, proved to be a burning and shining light, thereby verifying the prediction which Samuel Merwin once made in my hearing: "I think," said he, "that Charles will become a star of the first magnitude." In the afternoon of the day in which the district conference closed, I rode several miles in company with brother C. Sherman, preached in a school-house in the evening, and then went four miles further to his pious father's house, a habitation which had long been known as one of the *preachers' homes*. The next day, which was Saturday, I reached my circuit, and was ready for the duties of the sabbath. Before I pass on I will mention one circumstance which occurred not long before Charles Sherman and his pious father met in the realms of bliss, for there was but a short interval between the deaths of the two. The son came from his distant residence to visit his aged and infirm father. The old man's memory had so failed him *that could not recollect his own children*. *His house was near the house of*

God, and his son, while at home, preached in the church. After preaching, the father kindly approached the preacher, unconscious of his being one of his own family, and said, "Brother, will you go home with us? we entertain the preachers sometimes;"—thus showing that though he had forgotten many things, he was "not forgetful to entertain strangers."

Before the conference year closed we had a revival of religion in one part of our circuit, which greatly rejoiced my heart; yet, in reviewing the labors of that year, I mourn that I was not more faithful. It is possible that some persons, who might then have been led to Christ, had I been more watchful and zealous, are now in the world of wo. I do not think that I was fully sensible of the relative importance of pastoral visiting, till I had been in the ministry nearly seven years. Perhaps much more good might have been effected had I been as faithful in this department of labor as some of my brethren. A "course of study" was officially recommended to me and all the probationers of the conference; and we expected to be examined by a committee after we had been two years on trial. Among the books which I perused, in compliance with *that* recommendation, were Mosheim's *Ecclesiastical History*, Rollin's *History*, part of Clarke's

and part of Benson's Commentary. Prideaux's Connections, Locke on the Human Understanding, and Wesley's Sermons, were, I think, included. Our attention was also directed to grammar, logic, and rhetoric. Watson's incomparable Institutes and evangelical Exposition had not then been published on this side of the Atlantic. Having but few books of my own, I was thankful for the privilege of borrowing some of the books recommended, from my colleague, and other friends on the circuit.

While reading for the improvement of the mind, I did not feel willing to neglect the cultivation of religious affections in the heart. Religious biography, I have already remarked, was rendered peculiarly useful to me. Perhaps no work of that kind ever did me more good than the "Memoir of William Bramwell," which fell into my hands about this time. So highly do I prize that work, that I have more than once called attention to it through our religious paper, and should this notice of it add one more to the number of the readers of that good book, it would gladden my heart.

In June, 1824, the New-York Annual Conference held its session. My colleague attended, but I continued on the circuit, endeavoring *to promote the little revival* which had com-

menced in one neighborhood. When the preacher returned, he informed me that Rev. A. Scholefield was appointed preacher in charge of the Goshen circuit, to which I was reappointed. It will be remembered that I have stated that this good man commenced his labors as an itinerant preacher on Reading circuit. Then, when I was a lad of ten years old, I saw and heard him; but had not seen him from that time till fourteen years afterward, when he was appointed my senior colleague on Goshen circuit; and a most kind and fatherly colleague I found him. We labored together in harmony, but saw no very remarkable result of our labors. He had been attending the General Conference, in Baltimore, of which he was a member, and sometimes entertained me with descriptions of some of the most eminent men in that body, and by narrating some of the conversations that passed between them.

In the course of this year I attended three camp meetings. The first was at Burlington, Conn., under the superintendence of our new presiding elder, Rev. S. Luckey. It was a good meeting to many, and especially to one of the ministers, who was abundantly blessed of the Lord. One of the conversions which took place at this meeting I will advert to in few words.

It was that of a youth, the son of one who had been serving God ever since the days of Jesse Lee's travels in New-England, and who had come with this son (I believe the youngest) to the camp meeting, praying and hoping he would be induced to seek the Lord. Time passed away, but the son remained indifferent, and seemed inclined rather to trifle away his time, than to be even an attentive hearer of the truth. The father was grieved, and had thoughts of taking the son home before the meeting closed, fearing he would receive injury rather than good. I was a perfect stranger to the young man, and then knew nothing of these circumstances. But on the last evening of the meeting, during a very solemn and pathetic address which was given from the stand, I observed a young man listening attentively, till he began to weep, and, turning his back to the speaker, walked away among the trees. The thought occurred that probably he was affected by the word, and, being unwilling to yield, was endeavoring to hide his conviction. "Shall I not make an effort to do him good?" was the inquiry which arose in my mind. My resolution was formed immediately, and before I had lost sight of him, I started to overtake him. *Coming up gently behind him, I inquired concerning*

his feelings, found him serious and tender, and ascertained that he was the son of a pious brother in Christ, and advised him to seek for pardon without delay. He took the advice kindly, and, I believe, that night found mercy at the hand of the Lord. In a few years after this, I had the happiness of seeing this young man on the walls of Zion, and he is now laboring as the pastor of a Methodist church in one of the most flourishing cities in the state of New-York, a church containing more than five hundred communicants.

Another camp meeting which I attended this year was in North Canaan, Litchfield county, Conn. Here I had the pleasure of meeting with the following brethren in the ministry: Henry Stead, (who, as presiding elder of that district, had charge of the meeting,) George Coles, Timothy Benedict, Gershom Pierce, and several others. It was both pleasant and profitable to me to extend my acquaintance among my fathers and brethren in the ministry.

At this camp meeting brother Coles composed the following lines, descriptive of the character of the preachers who were present on that occasion:—

*Adorable Saviour, who, in thy right hand,
Hold'st the stars, and they shine at thy gracious command;*

We thank thee that *Canaan* is blessed with a cluster,
 Who shine upon us with a borrowed lustre.
 With pleasure we listen, and highly we prize,
 The prudent advices of *Henry*, (a) the wise:
 He warns us of danger, and points out the way
 In which we should travel by night and by day.
 Nor will we believe, though learned men tell us,
 That error is truth. Our *Gershom*, (b) the zealous,
 Will give us strong reasons, and arguments fair,
 And the truth as in Jesus will boldly declare.
 "Ye cannot be perfect," say some to this day,
 But *John*, (c) the beloved, has shown us the way:
 To *Arnold*, (d) the orator, much has been given;
 He calls to repentance, and points us to heaven.
 To *Asaph*, (e) the singer, we look for our guide
 In music's sweet strains. While the soft-flowing tide
 Of *Parmele's* (f) eloquence charmingly rolls,
 Taking captive our hearts, and delighting our souls.
 We're exhorted the kingdom of heaven to seek,
 And told of its blessings by *Moses* (g) the meek;
 We love the old way, which God hath appointed,
 And hail our Immanuel with *Cyrus*, (h) the anointed.
 Released from the furnace of sickness and pain,
 We are glad to see *Timothy* (i) here once again,
 With *Datus* (j) and *Earl*, (k) who were once in the field,
 And the sword of the Spirit did manfully wield.
 We are glad to hear *John*, (l) whose surname is Sweet,
 And all our dear brethren with kindness we'll greet;

(a) Henry Stead, P. E. (b) Gershom Pierce. (c) John Lovejoy. (d) Arnold Scholefield. (e) The author's assumed name. (f) Parmele Chamberlin. (g) Moses Amedon. (h) Cyrus Silliman. (i) Timothy Benedict. (j) Datus Ensign. (k) Earl Bancroft. (l) John Sweet, a local preacher.

With all our old friends that come from afar,
To encamp in the field, and to join in the war.

If *Robert* (m) and *Elbert* (n) will lead on the van,
And *Julius*, (o) and *Johnny*, (p) and *Coles*, (q) to a man,
Will stand in their lot, and proceed without fear,
And *Phineas* (r) and *Billy* (s) will bring up the rear :


If *Stephen*, (t) the martyr for Jesus, will pray,
And *Samuel*, (u) the prophet, will preach night and day ;
If the Spirit of truth will but lead us along,
" Hallelujah to Jesus " shall still be our song.

Then let the world rage, and our enemies frown,
In the strength of Jehovah we'll tread them all down ;
Our forces we'll range in the name of the Lord,
And victory and glory shall be our reward.

(m) Robert Travis. (n) Elbert Osborn. (o) Julius Field.
(p) John Nixon. (q) Coles Carpenter. (r) Phineas Cook.
(s) Billy Hibbard. (t) Stephen L. Stillman. (u) Samuel D.
Ferguson.

At each of the camp meetings in Burlington, and at this meeting in Canaan, it fell to my lot to preach one of the sermons. Several of the sermons preached by my brethren at this meeting were powerfully impressive, particularly a discourse from my colleague, from the solemn oath of the Lord, recorded Ezek. xxxiii, 11. Here, for the first time, I heard a sermon from Rev. Geo. Coles. It was concerning worshipping God after the way which some call heresy. Here, too, I formed a pleasing acquaintance with a young school teacher by the name of John B. Husted,

and received from him a pressing invitation to call on him, at his father's house, in Alford, in Massachusetts, if I should go to the camp meeting in Nassau, in Rensselaer county, N. Y., which was to be held in a few weeks. When the week of that camp meeting arrived, I rode, on Monday, forty miles on horseback, and stopped for the night at Mr. Husted's hospitable habitation. And often have I, since that time, enjoyed his hospitality with gratitude, and listened with delight to the accounts which he gave of the introduction of Methodism into Alford and the vicinity. He particularly named, among the pioneers, the Rev. Ebenezer Stevens, a good man, who was sometimes called *the hemlock preacher*. Whether it was because he resided in a cottage surrounded by lofty hemlock-trees, or because of some roughness and eccentricity in his manner of preaching, or from both causes combined, that he received this appellation, I cannot tell. He was doubtless a man of considerable ingenuity, deep piety, and extensive usefulness. When traveling a rough, mountainous circuit, which called him from his home several weeks at a time, he would return to his cottage among the hemlocks, where two plain chairs, and a long bench for the children *to sit on*, formed all the sitting accommodations



of the dwelling, and he would cheerfully converse with them and his friends on the things of God, and joyfully unite with them in humble prayer and praise. To murmuring and discontent he appeared to be a stranger: and his sincere humility was as remarkable as his contentment. Having spent one evening with Mr. Husted and his wife, before he departed he kneeled down to pray, commencing thus: "Lord, we have been talking about many things which we might as well have let alone. We pray thee to forgive us." I was the more interested in Mr. H.'s account of this good man, because in Litchfield county, where I was laboring, and where he had formerly labored, the name of father Stevens was as "ointment poured forth."


On Tuesday morning I left my friends at Alford, not knowing then that in the lapse of a few years the young schoolmaster would enter the ministry, and soon be appointed presiding elder, and be elected a delegate to the General Conference, as has been the case. Twenty miles, I think, was the distance which I rode from Alford, before I reached the camp ground, where religious exercises were just commencing. While the people were singing the first *hymn*, the presiding elder whispered to me that *a chair for the preacher* to kneel on would be

inconvenience, as the book board was rather too high. Looking down from the stand, I saw a plain-looking man, of farmer-like appearance, sitting in a chair near one of the posts which supported the stand, and I was on the point of asking him to give up his chair, but did not finally conclude to do so. In an hour or two after the close of the first service, I met with this old gentleman in the preachers' tent, and to my astonishment was introduced to him as Bishop George. My astonishment was the greater, because I had heard him preach eight years before, and yet I did not dream that this was he. Had I dispossessed him of his chair, it would have mortified *me* much, but I presume *he* would have passed it over with the utmost kindness. In the course of the meeting he preached a warm and powerful sermon, and, although the rain fell plentifully while he was preaching, it did not quench the holy flame burning in the venerable preacher's breast, or prevent it from kindling in the hearts of many of his hearers. The good bishop did not confine his labors to preaching, but in the prayer meeting pointed the mourner to Christ, and lifted "up holy hands" in prayer to God for them. It was said that in one tent where he labored, in the prayer meeting, *there were, during one evening, between*

twenty and thirty that professed to find mercy, and, among the rest, was a little boy, who, when he had obtained the blessing, threw his arms around the bishop's neck, and exclaimed, "O, father, do help me to praise the Lord." Some, with whom I have since become acquainted, have referred to that prayer meeting as the place of their espousal to Christ.

At this camp meeting there were some powerful exhortations delivered, and the people did not commence retiring to their tents as soon as the exhortation commenced; a habit too frequent at some camp meetings. Here, for the first time, I heard the fervent entreaties and solemn warnings of a minister who is still a member of the New-York Conference, and whose words were truly "words of fire." Many felt that they were indeed accompanied by the demonstration and power of the Spirit.

The love-feast on Friday, with which the meeting closed, was a most melting time. One short narrative I distinctly recollect, given by a minister who was a native of England, (Rev. Henry Stead,) where he had heard the holy William Bramwell preach in the open air. He had been laboring in America about twenty years. He told us that he had heard, in his *own country*, of the great opening for labor in



America, the camp meetings which had just been providentially commenced, and the revivals which followed, and he felt a desire to come here. He stated his impressions to his father-in-law, who said in reply, "While *you* live, I have no fears but that my daughter will be kindly provided for wherever you and she may go. But if you should die and leave her in that far-distant country, among strangers, I know not what she might suffer." "Never fear, father," replied the young minister, "I am going where the God of the Christians lives, and he will take care of us." How cheering to any minister, going forth among strangers, uncertain as to the treatment which he shall receive, to remember that he "is going where the God of the Christians lives!" The good man is now a worn-out soldier, but his pious wife, after having been his helper in the Lord's work in America for about twenty-two years, went home to rest, where one of her sons, Rev. William D. Stead, (a useful traveling preacher,) has lately gone to join her in worshipping the *God of the Christians* in his holy temple above. My journey back from this camp meeting was peculiarly pleasant. The weather was serene, the traveling good, and my soul was happy in God. *A part of the way I rode near the banks of the*

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Housatonick. This would naturally lead me to think of my native place, and my father's abode, not very far from the mouth of that stream, but nearly one hundred miles from where I then was. I rejoiced in the fact that God had given me fathers and mothers, brothers and sisters, among strangers.

Little did I then imagine that, in twenty years from that time, multitudes upon multitudes of travelers from Bridgeport and from Boston would be carried through that peaceful, quiet valley, on their way to Albany, with great velocity, in carriages moving without horses, and urged forward by the combined force of water and fire.

The Rev. Samuel Draper having been taken away by death just after receiving his appointment to Dutchess circuit, his colleague, brother Cochran, was assisted for some months by Cyrus Foss, a young local preacher, who had been licensed on the circuit. In January, 1825, the presiding elder thought it best for me to change with my dear brother Foss. This information was communicated to me two or three days before I was to leave for Dutchess. After enjoying a good quarterly meeting with our brethren *in Goshen*, and receiving an affectionate farewell from our friends, and especially from my

ad colleague, Mr. Scholefield, I went on my to preach Jesus among strangers. But my mer friend, Mr. Cochran, was ready to receive me kindly, and in the house of brother Van Benschoten, (now with God,) a steward and a local preacher, and a very kind man, I found a place to deposit such things as I did not wish constantly to carry with me. Before this, when but a boy, I had often heard the preachers speak of Peter Eighmey, and when I came in sight of the large Dutch stone house which the old gentleman and his pious companion occupied, I "thanked God and took courage." Learning that he and his wife could converse in the German language, (or high Dutch, as it is sometimes called,) my curiosity prompted me to ask them to let me hear a specimen, a request with which they readily complied. In Connecticut, where I had spent nearly all my days thus far, no one was found to converse in the Dutch or German language. Since then I have often heard, in some of the families where I have lodged, lively conversation in these languages. But pure religion is the same loving, joyful principle, among Dutch and English, Irish and Americans, and "Christ is all and in all." In the Dutch stone house of brother Eighmey I enjoyed some joyful hours with God's loving people.

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Amidst the happy seasons granted to me while on this circuit, I had some very powerful temptations; and, in looking back upon that part of my history, I cannot but adore the protecting goodness of my heavenly Father. And I am sensible, too, that more watchfulness and prayer would have been far better for my spiritual welfare.

Within the bounds of this circuit lived James P. Horton, whom I have before mentioned. For nearly a week together I enjoyed his company and assistance, which, at that time, was most opportune; for almost every day during that week I had two appointments, one in the afternoon, and another in the evening; and my voice was so much affected by a severe cold, that I should have found it very difficult to go through the duties expected of me without some help. Though I could not prevail on brother H. to preach for me but once, yet he was uniformly willing to give an exhortation. Sometimes, when I had preached thirty minutes, he would exhort forty-five minutes. The brethren all seemed glad to see and hear him, notwithstanding his peculiarities. Most of them had long known him, and they loved him for *his piety*. Perhaps I shall be pardoned if I *give one or two instances of his innocent mis-*

takes. I will first remark, however, that his soul was so full of gratitude, that of the abundance of the heart the mouth spoke. Sometimes, for want of a little more consideration, he would introduce an ascription of praise, as "glory," or "hallelujah," in such a connection with other sentences as to produce a somewhat ludicrous effect. Once, in exhorting at one of my appointments in the highlands near Cold Spring, on the Hudson River, he referred to the sufferings of St. Paul, using this expression, that "St. Paul received forty-nine stripes save one, hallelujah!" At another time I heard him relate a dream in a class meeting, concerning having a contest with Satan in the form of a snake:—"But," said he, "I picked up a *gad*,* and commenced laying on the strokes; but I found that before each stroke I had to look up: after striking once, I could not strike again till I had again looked up: and O what a *whaling* I did give him." Though there might be nothing supernatural in that dream, and though it was related in that peculiar way, there was in it a striking emblematical representation of the course to be pursued by the Christian in his conflicts with his spiritual foes:—

* *Meaning, a slender branch or limb of a tree.*

"For ever standing on his guard,
And *looking up* to" God.

Once I recollect he was so happy in his God when we retired to rest, that after we had lain down, he broke forth into singing one of his favorite hymns, thus reminding me of the language of the Psalmist, in the 5th verse of the 149th Psalm. Perhaps I had better anticipate my narrative so far as to say that, in the year 1840, when returning from a camp meeting to the city of New-York, I listened to the last exhortation which I ever heard from the lips of "Uncle Jimmy," as he was familiarly called. The spacious deck of the steamboat was crowded with people, and much melting tenderness of feeling mingled with the holy joy that pervaded the assembly. Just before he sat down, he was expressing, in a simple yet fluent manner, his hope of glory, and describing his expectations of meeting prophets, apostles, and martyrs, in the bright abode. "There," said he, "I expect, in the regions of the heavenly glory, to meet dear old father Wesley. And what shall I tell him from you, brother Osborn?" said he, turning suddenly toward me. "Tell him that I am determined to meet him in heaven, and to get as many as I can to go *there with me*," was my answer. "I will," was


the reply of the holy brother, and immediately he sat down. May God grant that this promise made to the sainted Wesley, through one who has since gone to join "the saints in light," together with all the solemn promises made to God by his unworthy servant, the writer, may be religiously kept.

During the four months which I spent with brother Cochran, in the Dutchess circuit, we had reason to believe that a number were converted; and I think about twenty-five were added to the societies.

It was not far from this time that I formed an acquaintance with Alpheus Jewett and his wife, of Sharon, in Connecticut, a town adjoining Dutchess county. They were among the earliest Methodists in the state, and could tell of some of the first visits made to that part of the country by Freeborn Garrettson, Cornelius Cook, Benjamin Abbott, and others. The wife of my beloved colleague was a daughter of theirs. One of their sons has been *more than thirty-eight* years an itinerant minister, and for a number of years a presiding elder, while another son, who bears the name of the sainted Garrettson, (given him by his parents no doubt from grateful affection to that good man,) has recently *been appointed one of the judges of the highest*

court of the state of New-York. May their children and children's children follow them home to paradise.

In May, 1825, I left my circuit for conference, which was to be held this year in the city of Troy, this being some years before the Troy Conference was set off from the New-York Conference. When I arrived at Amenia, I fell in company with Rev. R. Seney and Rev. C. Siliman, who were going to conference together, and as I was a stranger to the road, their company was the more agreeable. On our way we dined with Charles Northrop, and found hospitable entertainment at night with a good brother in the city of Hudson. As I rode on horseback and my brethren in a carriage, I had less opportunity for conversation and more for reflection. I had endeavored to prepare for the examination, which was to precede admission into full connection, but how I should pass I could not foretell: and if I passed that ordeal, it was uncertain what disposition the conference would make of my case: and if admitted, I could not tell how far I might be sent, nor what kind of a circuit I should have: but one thing cheered my heart—the consideration *that* the great God rules and overrules for *good*. *My little stock of clothing I carried with*



me, so as to be ready, when conference closed, to go to my appointment, if I should receive one, whether it were in the north or the south, at the east or the west. From Hudson we went on Saturday to the city of Albany, where my brethren remained till Monday. The stationed preacher in the city, Rev. T. Spicer, finding it necessary for me to go on, as I had to be in Troy on Monday morning to meet the committee, kindly gave me directions, and I went on and crossed the river in the ferry-boat just after the setting of the sun, and, for the first time, found myself in the pleasant city of Troy. Here I was appointed to board with a kind brother by the name of Wallace.

On Monday morning the committee, namely, N. Bangs, P. P. Sandford, D. Ostrander, E. Washburn, and S. Luckey, met to examine the candidates in regard to their knowledge of theology, &c. About eight hours were occupied during the morning, afternoon, and evening, in this examination, and I felt thankful for that measure of composure of spirit which I was enabled to maintain.

On Tuesday morning at nine o'clock the New-York Conference began its session. To me it was an interesting sight to behold so many of *my fathers in the ministry*, some of whom had

been toiling on the borders of Canada, and others on the shores of Long Island, assembled together to deliberate on the affairs of the church. Many of these ministers I had heard preach in the days of my early youth; with several others I had formed an acquaintance during the last two years; and there were many more whose names I had often seen in the Minutes, but whose faces I had never seen before. Bishops George and Hedding were present: the latter I had never seen before: he had then been but about one year in the episcopacy.

I believe it was on the second day of the conference that my case was brought forward, and I retired from the conference-room with a trembling heart, while they deliberated on the matter. My suspense was removed in a short time by the information that I was admitted into full connection, and elected to deacon's orders. Before this, however, all the candidates had passed a very serious examination before the conference, and had made solemn promises in answer to the questions on page 38 of the Discipline, (edition of 1844,) section 9, chapter 1. These questions were accompanied with some impressive remarks by one of the bishops. After being admitted into full connection I was at liberty to vote in the conference.

On sabbath the deacons and elders were to be ordained—the former in Lansingburgh, by Bishop George, and the latter in Troy, by Bishop Hedding. On sabbath morning brother J. Z. Nichols and myself walked three miles from Troy, along the pleasant banks of the Hudson, to the little, low Methodist chapel, then standing in the village of Lansingburgh, where we, in company with several others, were to be solemnly set apart to the work of the ministry, by the imposition of hands. It was a fine morning, and the house was crowded. The bishop preached most impressively from 2 Cor. v, 14, 15; and who could hear that sermon and not be moved—deeply moved? Among those ordained on that occasion were Parmele Chamberlin, Bezaleel Howe, John Kennaday, Wesley P. Lake, Richard Seaman, Robert Travis, William Todd, and William M. Willett. So affecting were the remarks made by our superintendent as he passed along within the communion rails, laying his hands upon the head of one after another, that almost every one of us was melted into tears, and several seemed overwhelmed with emotion. Especially did he urge us not to suffer even the tears of affectionate relatives to hinder us in the work of the Lord.

When the numbers in society were reported in conference, it was found there was a net gain of between six and seven hundred. Bishop George arose and remarked, that the tide of immigration, constantly flowing to the west, accounted in part for the smallness of this increase. But he urged us to consider whether a greater degree of zeal and faithfulness in the ministers of that conference (numbering more than one hundred) might not have been attended with much larger accessions of genuine converts. The few words which he uttered on that occasion sunk down into my heart.

At the close of the conference I was appointed to the Burlington circuit, in Connecticut, on which I labored two years. Rev. Samuel D. Ferguson was the preacher in charge the first year, and Rev. Joseph M'Creary the second. In these two years we witnessed some spiritual prosperity. In one part of Colebrook there was a considerable revival; and, among others who were brought in, one (who attributed his awakening, through God's blessing, to my instrumentality) has since that time, as I have been informed, commenced preaching the gospel in one of the western states. There were conversions *also in Winsted, Newfield, and perhaps some other places, for we preached also in Burling-*

ton, Farmington, Barkhamsted, Wolcottville, Harwinton, New-Hartford, Torrington, and the west part of Hartland. In some places we witnessed contentions among brethren in the society, which were very unpleasant to us, and probably hindered, in some degree, the spread of pure religion : nevertheless, there were very many faithful souls in this circuit, several of whom have since then gone to their rest in heaven.

While laboring in this circuit, I thought it most for the glory of God to change my condition in life, and was married September 22, 1825, to Miss Sarah Wright, of Cornwall, whom I had known for more than two years. I had considered it a prudent and proper course to abstain from taking any steps whatever toward matrimony, until I had consulted with some of the most prudent of my brethren, and until I believed the time was nearly come for me to enter into that "holy estate;" for I had known some cases where young ministers had plunged themselves into difficulty, and others into grief, simply for want of consideration ; not to speak of some other cases still more dishonorable to the cause of Christ. I trust that our union was of God, and *has been sanctified to our mutual benefit.* *May we be faithful to our blessed Lord,*

“And kindly help each other on,
Till both receive the starry crown.”

In August, 1826, I attended a camp meeting at Middlebury, in Connecticut, where a young man was awakened, who came a few weeks afterward to another camp meeting in Barkhamsted, where I had the pleasure of leading him to the altar of prayer, and rejoicing over him as one of the lambs of the Redeemer. He is now (March, 1846) presiding elder of the Paterson district, in New-Jersey.

At this camp meeting our beloved brother Scholefield presided. And here I felt perhaps more of the melting love of Christ in my heart while preaching, than I ever felt at any other time, while engaged in that exercise. Here I formed my first acquaintance with Rev. Elisha Andrews, then a young preacher full of zeal in his Master's cause. He came there in company with his colleague, J. B. Husted, about sixty miles on horseback. About eighteen years after that, while on his way to another camp meeting, he was drowned in the Hudson River, and his spirit was suddenly called home.

In May, 1826, I made a short visit to my dear parents, where I met my brother and sisters, and then went to the city of New-York to attend conference. Bishop George and Bishop

M^r Kendree were present, the latter so feeble as to be unable to perform much of the labor devolving on the superintendents; yet he was continued in this world of toil five or six years longer than his healthy and robust colleague, Enoch George. A case of intemperance came up at this conference, which led the bishop to make some very forcible remarks, which I shall never forget. He cautioned us against the least approach toward such a dreadful whirlpool.

At this conference I formed an acquaintance with two men, for which I hope to bless God in eternity. Both of them were located preachers, and intimate friends of each other. Their names were Joel Ketchum and Elijah Chichester. The latter yet lives in Lansingburgh, where he resided in 1826; the former, I trust, now lives in the New Jerusalem. It appears that he commenced traveling in 1793, and located in 1801; having, in that time, labored on Marblehead circuit, in Massachusetts; on Middletown and Pomfret circuits, in Connecticut; in the city of Albany, and on Cambridge and Saratoga circuits, in the state of New-York. Whether he erred or not in locating, it is not for me to say; but of one thing I am certain, *that I met with no encouragement to locate*

while I was sojourning at his house during the conference. At that time he was so weak in body that he could not pray vocally, nor converse much, except in a whisper: yet this was very profitable to me; and while brother Chichester was leading our family devotions, God often met us in great mercy, and refreshed our souls abundantly. I will here say that when I last saw brother Ketchum, (in 1829,) his health was so far restored, that I had the pleasure of walking with him to his appointment, of hearing him preach an excellent sermon in Duane-street church, and of listening to his remarks in conversation on the subject of *continuance in secret prayer*. Of this he himself proved the benefit, as I have since learned from his pious, aged widow. She told me that, for some time before his departure, he was in the habit of frequently rising very early, that he might redeem a *longer* season for private devotion, and that she believed he was often abundantly blessed in thus following the example of Him who, when on earth, "rose up a great while before day" to pray. Shortly after my last interview with him, he sailed for Charleston on business, and neither he nor the vessel *has since been heard of*; but,

"God his Redeemer lives,
And ever from the skies
Looks down, and watches all his dust,
Till he shall bid it rise."

But to return to the Burlington circuit. The second winter which I spent there was abundant in snow; and the country being hilly, and in some places mountainous, the traveling was unpleasant. From information received from good authority, I suppose some of the snow-banks near my house, over which I frequently passed with my horse and sleigh, were fourteen or fifteen feet deep. Sometimes, when the snow had recently fallen, I did not venture to go quite home with my sleigh when I returned from my appointments, (fearing that I might stick fast in a snow-bank,) but left it at the house of a kind friend, who lived a little south of me, on much lower ground, and more sheltered from the wintry winds. But I lived to see that winter pass away, and the spring return in her beauty to bless the earth.

Many names connected with the Burlington circuit I should delight to record, but I will confine myself to four:—Daniel Coe,* a local

* Mr. C. has been suddenly called from his work to glory, since the above was written.

elder, who was a preacher long before I was in the ministry, (indeed, he was a member of the body which gave me my first license;) Thomas Sparks, a native of England, then a local, now a traveling, preacher; David Coe,* a leader and steward of the church, whose solemn; joyful songs of praise (though his body slumbers in the grave) still seem as it were to sound in my ears; and Judah Lewis, an exhorter, who, I trust, is still serving God either in the far west on earth, or in the upper **and better** country which he so diligently sought.

On my way with my wife to a quarterly meeting, in December, 1826, I called at the post-office, and found a letter, which I perceived, from the date of the post-mark, had been delayed by some accident or misdirection. I opened it, and read the account of my dear father's death. Tears streamed from my eyes, to the relief of my aching and throbbing heart, while my companion wept with me, as we went on our way. I had been to visit him in the former part of his illness, supposed him to be gaining when I left him, and almost concluded that he must be nearly well, as no letter came for some time, when the fatal tidings ar-

* *His* wife and my wife were sisters.

rived. But we did not mourn as those who have no hope, but thanked God for the reason we had to believe that he died in the Lord. The last letter which I received from him contained clear indications that he had seen his mistake in being so unwilling that his son should become an itinerant minister.

CHAPTER IV.

FROM THE AUTHOR'S ORDINATION AS AN ELDER UNTIL THE CLOSE OF HIS LABORS ON CHATHAM CIRCUIT, IN 1831.

At the conference held in Troy, in May, 1827, I was ordained elder by the hands of the same good man who had ordained me a deacon, two years before. May I never forget that the vows of God are upon me! "I have opened my mouth unto the Lord, and I ~~will~~ not go back." I was appointed to the charge of the Granville circuit, embracing the following places in Massachusetts, namely: Feeding-hills, Southwick, Tatham, Westfield, Granville, East Granville, Otis, Blandford, Becket, Russel, Chester, and Worthington. Besides these appointments, my colleagues and I preached in Suffield, Windsor, Wintonbury, (now Bloomfield,) Rainbow, Turkey-hills, Simsbury, Granby, East Granby, Hartland, and Barkhamstead, in Connecticut. I removed my family about forty miles by land, to Feeding-hills, a parish in the town of West Springfield. My colleagues were Rev. C. F. Pelton, and a supernumerary preacher, Rev. C. Culver. *I felt greatly my need of wisdom, as this was the first year in which I had been appointed to*


the charge of a circuit. I feared that I might neglect some act of discipline which was necessary, or perform it in such a manner as would do more harm than good. But I sought the counsel of my colleagues, and of my presiding elder, brother Scholefield, who was a father to us all. We were obliged to expel a few persons who would not reform.

During the winter season we had an abundance of snow in the west and north part of the circuit, where the hills were high, and the winds bleak ~~and~~ cold. In one or two cases I was several hours in getting six or seven miles to an appointment. But God preserved man and beast, and watched over my family in mercy during my absence.

While on this circuit I visited the Connecticut state prison in Granby, then known by the name of Newgate. This was a short time before the new state prison in Wethersfield was completed. Not long after I wrote an article, which was published in a religious periodical, concerning this visit, a part of which I will here subjoin:—

“It was a fine morning in June; fragrant flowers bloomed in their native beauty, and the cheerful birds sung among the branches, as we traveled along. At length we beheld the pri-

son among the trees at a little distance before us. Ah! thought I, how often has the sight of those buildings struck the heart of a poor criminal with anguish! When we approached and rang the bell, the gate was opened, and we were conducted by one of the officers of the guard to the different apartments of the prison. Here we saw our fellow-men, who were doomed (some of them for years and others for life) to hard labor and confinement. The guards on the walls, armed with muskets; the chains worn by some of the prisoners; and the high walls that encompassed the prison, conspired to render the idea of imprisonment in such a place dreadful to the human mind. In vain are flowers and fruits scattered in profusion over the country around the prison; the prisoners see them not. Amid the noise of hammers, axes, saws, &c., they may possibly, now and then, hear the notes of the feathered songsters of the air, but this can only serve to tantalize them with the idea of surrounding enjoyments from which they are cut off. The friends of the prisoner—where are they? Where are the parents who watched over his infantile years; the brothers and sisters who were the companions of his childhood; the wife, the children whom he once embraced—*where are they?* Ah! how painful the thought!



“As we went from one apartment to another, and beheld these wretched criminals, they would raise their eyes toward the door, as if to see whether a relative had come to visit them: but I was a stranger to all, and they went on with their labor. I could not refrain from praying that my little son (who was in my arms) might never be brought to such an unhappy situation.

“Before we left the prison we were conducted into the caverns beneath.* Each of us carried a lighted candle as we descended into this subterranean region. And here we were shown the damp room where the prisoners formerly slept. Happily this practice was discontinued after a season. We proceeded from one part of the cavern to another, till our guide led us into what he called the *sounding-room*, where the echoes of the voice produced a loud and singular sound; and here was a chain firmly fastened to the rock, where very obstinate criminals are sometimes confined till they submit to the regulations of the establishment.

“This place has been compared by some to the abode of the wicked in another world, and perhaps it is a very suitable emblem. But though

* These were opened for mining purposes, I believe, long before a prison was established there.

there may be a strong resemblance, yet the one seems infinitely more intolerable than the other. *Here* the prisoner may have food and water; but *there* the wicked wretch, confined in the prison of despair, may look in vain for a drop of water to cool his tongue. *Here* the criminal may sometimes be solaced by a visit from his friends; but *there* the thought of meeting them leads him to exclaim, 'Let them not come to this place of torment.' *Here* the criminal may hope for liberation at the end of his term; yea, perhaps sooner, through the compassion of those in power; or even if his confinement is to continue through life, he looks forward to the day when his mortal frame shall rest in the quiet grave; but *there* the eye of the unhappy creature looks through the vista of ages to come, and sees no end—*no end*—NO END to his confinement and punishment. *Here* the prisoner employs part of his time in projecting possible methods of escape; but *there* he ruminates in gloomy horror on the impossibility of *any* escape. *Here* the obstinate criminal, confined in the dark cavern, hears his groans 'return in sad echoes,' while none is near to pity him and sympathize with him; but *there* the condemned soul is not *only* unpitied, but probably tormented by the *devil and his angels*. We dread the thought of

being confined in an earthly prison like this; how much more should we dread the idea of being immured in that dungeon from which there is no return! How awful would be our feelings did we know that one poor man was pining in imprisonment in consequence of crimes committed through our solicitation, or by our encouragement; and how dreadful must be our condemnation should we encourage souls in the way to endless perdition! *Here*, perhaps, is a prisoner who may console himself with the consciousness of innocence of the crime for which he has been condemned; but *there* the remembrance of having sinned against an infinite God, and slighted infinite mercy, will produce a conviction in the sinner's breast that he deserves eternal punishment, and 'every mouth will be stopped.' 'Flee from the wrath to come,' for mercy yet waits to be gracious to penitent rebels."

I have before spoken of the satisfaction which I felt in perusing the first religious paper I ever saw; but I have neglected to mention that, while laboring on Burlington circuit, I obtained access to *Zion's Herald*, and before I left that circuit had the pleasure of acting as an agent for the *Christian Advocate*, which was first issued in 1826: and to this day I take a deep interest

in the weekly visits of these bearers of good tidings. The first scrap of my own writing which appeared in print was a little allegorical article entitled "Trial for Witchcraft," published first in *Zion's Herald*, and copied into some other religious papers. The next was "A Father's Letter to an Infant Son," which was copied by the *Advocate*, and one or two other periodicals. Both of these trifles, as well as several others written within a few years after, were sent to the editors without the writer's real name. Believing religious papers to be useful, and relying upon the judgment and fidelity of editors to reject, abridge, or insert, as the general good might require, I have thought it my duty to furnish short articles occasionally, and place them at their disposal; sometimes using one fictitious signature, at other times another.

In Westfield we preached frequently at the house of brother Henry Douglass, a pious mechanic. Two young men, in his employment then, are now itinerant Methodist ministers, Davis Stocking and Alden S. Cooper. I believe the latter was licensed to exhort during the second year in which I was on the Granville *circuit*; and he has been for some years a *preacher in the Troy Conference*. Brother

Stocking united with our church, on probation, when I preached at Westfield, for the first time, and I had the pleasure of signing his license to exhort before I left the circuit. For the last two years he has been stationed in Newburgh, in the New-York Conference. May they both long live to build up Zion!

When I first visited Wintonbury, I formed an acquaintance with a brother, (a young married man,) who, I soon learned, had exercises on the duty of entering the ministry. Finding that the brethren had confidence in him, I arranged matters so as to hear him preach, and cheerfully united with the ensuing quarterly conference in recommending him to the district conference for license. Such was the satisfaction given by his labors during eighteen months, that the last quarterly conference held before I left the circuit recommended him for admission, on trial, as a traveling preacher, and in May or June, 1829, he found his way to his appointed circuit, in the northern part of the state of Vermont. His name was Edwin E. Griswold, since well known by our brethren in New-York, New-Haven, Brooklyn, Newburgh, Middletown, Hempstead, and many other places, as an acceptable ambassador of Christ.

Saybrook is famous in the early ecclesiastical

history of Connecticut, and when I learned that there was to be a camp meeting there, I had a little curiosity to go to the place, the name of which was associated with the celebrated "Platform." I trust, however, that a stronger and far higher motive than curiosity was the chief cause of my going. Truly it was good to be there. One evening, after the preachers had mostly retired to rest, a messenger came to the preachers' tent, inviting brother Heman Bangs (who had recently labored in the city of Middletown) to go to one of the Middletown tents. By his invitation, I arose from my resting place and went with him. We found father Washburn, who was their present pastor, rejoicing with some who had just entered into the liberty of the children of God. It was a season long to be remembered.

While I was preaching on gospel freedom at that camp meeting, I took occasion to speak also of the terrible slavery of sin ; and, during my remarks, a young woman, to whom I was a stranger, who was standing on the borders of the large congregation, suddenly shrieked aloud, and fell helpless to the earth. I afterward learned, from a preacher who labored in the *section of country* where she resided, that, *before the meeting* closed, (I know not how soon


after the above circumstance,) she ventured by faith upon the merits of Christ; and I hope, if still alive, she is living for God and for heaven.

When a boy, in the time of the war of 1812-13-14, I was much interested in reading and hearing of the battles, both on the land and on the sea, between the American and British forces. I had heard the thunder of the enemy's cannon, as his ships floated over Long Island Sound. The name of the brave Decatur was familiar to my youthful ear, and the victory which he gained over the British frigate *Macedonian* (facetiously called sometimes *Alexander the Great*) had made a deep impression on my mind. Little did I think, in 1827, while floating down the Connecticut River, in the steamboat, to the Saybrook camp meeting, that I should there meet with one who fought on board of the *Macedonian* in 1812, and was taken prisoner with her, now fighting under the banner of King Jesus, a happy member of the Methodist Church: yet this proved to be the case; and if any desire to know the interesting particulars of that man's eventful life, they may find them detailed in a very pleasing narrative entitled "*Thirty Years from Home; or, A Voice from the Main Deck, being the Experience of*

Samuel Leech." It is written by himself. The pious reader will be pleased to learn that I have lately heard directly from Mr. L. by a relative of mine; that he is still living in Wilbraham, Mass., and faithfully serving that God who "covered his head in the day of battle." But every humane person, who reads his description of the horrors of the fight, as described in his book, from page 126 to page 140, must unite in the prayer, that God would hasten the day when nations will learn war no more.

I find, among my papers, a letter written just after the close of the first year of my labors on Granville circuit, from which I extract the following:—

"God has been merciful to this circuit during the past conference year. Though there has been, and still is, too much indifference in some places, yet there have been seasons of refreshing from the Lord. Brother Culver has been enabled to form a new society in Worthington and the borders of Chester, which numbered about thirty-three members at the time of conference, who are now preparing to build a house of worship. This society has recently been set off to another circuit. Upward of eighty have *joined our church* on probation in the circuit *during the last conference year.*"



At the conference in New-York, in 1828, the presiding elder of our district, brother Scholefield, was not with us. He was taken sick in May, while attending the General Conference at Pittsburgh, far from his family and home, and sickness detained him there after the General Conference closed: but a kind brother delegate, Rev. Tobias Spicer, remained with him till he ventured to leave Pittsburgh, and they returned home together. May God grant that these friends may meet in that city where sickness cannot come, and where friends never part.

How affectionately did Bishop George refer to the absence and illness of brother Scholefield, at that conference, and how little did we then think, while listening to the bishop's remarks, that we should "see his face no more" on earth! In a few short months his spirit took its upward flight to the land of glorious rest.

About this time I was requested, by some of my brethren, to consult some eminent surgeons on the possibility of uniting my two palates, by a surgical operation, so as to form but one, or to have some artificial appendage attached to the roof of the mouth, that would remedy my defect in speaking. But though I have conversed with some of the most eminent surgeons

in our land, the facts which have come to my knowledge have led me to believe (whatever surgeons might hope) that I must wait till the resurrection morning before I have perfect organs of speech. "Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight."


At Springfield, about six miles from my residence, Rev. Timothy Merritt labored during the two years which I spent on the Granville circuit. He was a good old soldier of the Lord Jesus Christ, who consecrated his mind, his tongue, and his pen, to the cause of the Redeemer and the good of souls. His field of labor was in one conference and mine in another, being divided by the Connecticut River, but our hearts were united. We have rejoiced together at his house, and at mine; while riding together in the carriage, and when worshipping in the tented grove. With this good man I visited Dr. Fisk, at Wilbraham, when he was the principal of the academy in that place. My wife and myself can never forget one happy, solemn season, (a select watch-night,) which we enjoyed with T. Merritt, when the blessing of perfect love was the subject of special conversation and earnest prayer. I bless God that I was permitted to *form some acquaintance* with that good and

great man, Dr. Fisk, and had the privilege of entertaining him under my roof. He visited most of the towns in our county, and preached temperance sermons, and formed temperance societies. Many of the people were convinced by his reasoning, captivated by his eloquence, and charmed with his piety. When the first opportunity presented, I cheerfully united with the temperance society on the old pledge, and seven years afterward, when invited to sign the pledge of total abstinence from all intoxicating liquor as a beverage, I readily consented, and have never yet been sorry. Hoping that most of my readers have read, or will read, the interesting description of Dr. Fisk given by Dr. Bangs, in the fourth volume of his History, pages 313-329, I will say but little more concerning him. In his journeyings he called on a family, which happened, at that moment, to be unusually busy in some domestic concerns. It was near noon, and he was asked to stop and take such a dinner as they could prepare under the circumstances. He led his horse to the stable, and made everything pleasant to the family: when one of his friend's children was uneasy, he quieted it on his knee, and left a strong conviction upon the minds of the family that

he was an humble follower of the meek and lowly Jesus, and an eminent servant of the Most High God.

In the jail at Springfield, I made a religious visit to a man who had murdered his wife in Westfield, and soon afterward I was present at his trial and conviction. It was the first time I had ever seen a man tried for his life, and it brought to my mind solemn thoughts of that day when "the dead, small and great, will stand before God."

In Feeding-hills I first saw a Christian die—Mrs. Waters—who had been serving God faithfully from her youth for about twenty years. During an illness of several days she had manifested confidence in God. When death commenced his work, they sent for my wife and myself. We arose, made hasty preparations, and walked together to the chamber of the dying, while the beams of the morning star in the east served to remind us that, with the Christian, the night of death would be followed by the daylight of glory. We found her speechless, with her companion, children, and other friends, around her, while one was taking care of her infant but a few months old. By signs she *made us understand* that she wished us to sing; *and while we were singing the hymn beginning*



"On Jordan's stormy banks I stand,"

she fixed her eyes, with an earnest gaze, as if looking at some object above her, clapped her hands repeatedly, and expired. While returning home, just as the sun was rising, my prayer was, "Let me die the death of the righteous."

If a wish to study brevity should lead me to omit recording, in my narrative, any more instances of Christian triumph in death, let no one suppose that this is the only case in which I have seen that

"Jesus can make a dying bed
Feel soft as downy pillows are."

About this time I purchased "Foster's Essays," and found them a rich treasure. I would recommend, especially, the essay on "Decision of Character" to every young Christian, and particularly to every young minister. I have omitted to mention that my colleagues on this circuit, during the second year, were Rev. Luther Mead and Rev. C. Culver. In September, 1828, I rode about sixty miles on horseback to a camp meeting in the west part of New-Lebanon, in Columbia county, New-York. On the way, when nearly there, I was taken very ill, and for a short time had some apprehensions that I should die, for my disease was the same as *that which carried my father, my grandmother,*

and my aunt, out of time into eternity : but my mind was calmly stayed upon God. My disease abating, I moved slowly on to the meeting, and before it closed was able to preach once to the people, who bore with my weakness, and I believe ardently prayed for me, for it was a season of very peculiar blessedness to my soul.

I closed my labors on the Granville circuit in May, 1829. Since that time it has been divided and subdivided ; part of it has been set off to the New-England Conference, where it naturally belonged. In Westfield, where we preached once in two weeks on a week evening, in a private house, they have since built a Methodist church ; and when their congregation needed a larger and better one, it was erected ; and, in 1844, the New-England Conference held its session there,* and found accommodations among that people. Surely the "little one" sometimes becomes "a thousand," according to prophecy.

There was then no railroad from Boston to Albany ; hence, when I received my appointment at the conference in Troy, in 1829, to the Chatham circuit, in the state of New-York, I

* The good bishop who presided at that conference was, I believe, an unconverted schoolmaster in or near the north-western corner of Connecticut, in the year 1827. "What hath God wrought?"

avail myself of the slow and wearisome
a of horses and wagons to convey my fa
and goods over the mountains that divide
valley of the Connecticut from the valley
the Hudson. On the summit of one of these
mountains I met Bishop Hedding, going to at
tend one of the eastern conferences. He was
traveling in a sulkey, and when I told him that
I was on my way to do that part of the Lord's
work which he had "advised," and in that place
which he "judged most for the glory of God,"
he gave me kind encouragement to proceed.

Two days' journey brought me to New-Lebanon, to a house in the west part of the town (near the residence of a good steward by the name of Jesse Hand,*) which the stewards had hired for the preacher who might come to their circuit. It was about six miles from the celebrated Shaker village, and about the same distance from the once famous "Springs." An old, pious, and respectable Methodist in New-Lebanon, had once been a Shaker in his earlier days, and well remembered the celebrated Mother Ann. The account which he gave me had

* This good man died in the triumph of faith in the town of Hudson, Walworth, Wisconsin Territory, January 15, 1846. His last words were about "a better country, even a heavenly."

no tendency to increase my confidence either in the piety of their leaders or the utility of the institution. My colleague, the first year, was Rev. Jacob Hall, who, being an older minister than myself, had charge of the circuit. The second year I was associated with a young minister, brother H. Burton, a probationer in the traveling connection. During the second year one of the appointments on the circuit (Nassau village) was supplied as a station by brother C. F. Pelton, though it remained connected in one quarterly conference. I can speak of my two years on the circuit more conveniently in the collective form of one *term*, because I cannot always recollect in which year some events happened.

At a quarterly meeting at China Hill, we were favored with the presence of brother Merwin, then on his way from Troy, where he resided, to a camp meeting at Pittsfield. In his discourse he described the prospect which the Christian enjoys of the heavenly land, under the emblem of the mariner, as he approaches the shores of a delightful country, raising his glass and surveying the beauties of the scene. Putting up one hand before the other, *in the attitude* of a man holding a spyglass to *one eye* and closing the other, he moved his

head slowly around, as if changing the direction of the glass from object to object, speaking at the same time, in the most feeling manner, of thrones and sceptres, crowns and palms of victory, "sweet fields of living green, and rivers of pure delight." God blessed his people through the instrumentality of his servant, and one of them appeared to be full of glorious hope. It was brother Hand, whose happy death I have just mentioned. Are not these brethren now exploring together those heavenly regions? Some who read this may remember with what child-like simplicity brother Merwin used to say, when happy in God, "There certainly is a heaven."

Two camp meetings were held on the circuit in Greenbush, on the grounds of Sebastian Weatherwax—one in 1829, the other in 1830. On this ground souls were "brought home to God." Here I heard, among other ministers, J. B. Stratton, E. Chichester, and Asa Kent, and was much blessed in listening to the messages of mercy from their lips. Brother Kent was from the New-England Conference, and labored especially, both in preaching and in the prayer meetings, to lead Christians to seek holiness of heart.

On the next sabbath after the camp meeting

in 1829, a young man tarried in class meeting after the preaching, at Chatham, and told us that, during the week previous, he had sought and found the Saviour. Not knowing him, and having heard nothing of his case at the camp meeting, I listened with some doubt, hardly able to "believe that he *was* a disciple." But, in a day or two, I went into the neighborhood where this young man was teaching school, and found Christians rejoicing in the happy change that had taken place in their schoolmaster. It appears that he went to the camp meeting a trifling, but not an immoral, backslider. The ball-room had, perhaps, stolen his heart away from God. He expected to meet some of his young associates at the meeting, but when he arrived there he found them not. The pious wife of my beloved colleague, who knew him, took an opportunity to exhort him earnestly to return to the Lord. A pious relative made a similar effort. The blessing of the Lord crowned the attempt; and, in the course of the afternoon, he entered the prayer meeting desiring an interest in the prayers of the people of God. Scarcely had he taken this decided step, before the prayer meeting was closed by the call for *the people* to resort to the stand for preaching. *But the snare of the devil was broken; and just*

as the sun was setting, in answer to the prayer of faith, "the Sun of righteousness" arose upon his soul "with healing in his wings." Thus were the prayers of his pious father and mother in a measure answered: they had often prayed that heaven and hell might not divide their little family. Those parents now sleep in their graves, and that son is preaching Jesus on the shores of Lake Champlain. He is now (August, 1847) presiding elder of the Plattsburgh district, in the Troy Conference.

Among the local preachers on this circuit, were two who had long been acquainted with Methodism, at both of whose houses I often found hospitable entertainment. Rev. David Weager resided in Ghent: his father's house, or barn, was one of Benjamin Abbott's preaching places when he traveled Dutchess circuit, in 1789, which, at that time, extended almost as far north, I believe, as the city of Albany. David found the Lord when but a child, and yet lives, I believe, to proclaim the glad tidings of salvation. Rev. Justus Gregory resided at Sand Lake, in Rensselaer county. When B. Abbott came to Dutchess circuit, J. Gregory was a proud young merchant in Dover; but God made that plain-spoken minister the means of *his awakening and conversion.*

One sabbath morning I rode eight miles from Valatie, (where I had preached on Saturday evening,) to Chatham, and preached at 10 o'clock. When the service was over, a young man, who was a near neighbor of mine, came to me and informed me that my house was burnt to ashes. I was, however, very grateful to God who had preserved all my dear family from the flames, and very thankful to his people for their kindness in making up the loss which I had sustained. Temporary conflagrations here are dreadful, but "who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?"

A. Scholefield, who had been my preacher in charge, (in 1824,) and, after that, my presiding elder, (in 1827,) was now a supernumerary preacher dwelling on this circuit. Once in four weeks I generally had the pleasure of calling at his house, and he would kindly go with me, pray for me, and help me in the pulpit. One evening which I spent with him I well remember: it was at his own house, in company with his family, brother Hall, his wife, my wife, and a young local preacher. The blessed Jesus was in the midst. We had a most melting, heavenly season, which I trust will be *gratefully* remembered by us all in another world.

In the neighborhood called Oak Hill we had quite a revival of religion : also in that part of New-Lebanon where I resided, several professed to find the Saviour. One morning, while I was at breakfast, a lad, who lived about two miles distant, rode up to the door and told me that his parents wished me to come to their house. I went directly, and found a young man, who was in their employment, earnestly seeking for mercy. When he found the blessing, he cheerfully and boldly declared the goodness of God to others, and some of them fled to the ark of safety. One young man, when ploughing in the field while his father and mother were gone to camp meeting, began to soliloquize thus :—“ My parents are at camp meeting, and I am here : but are they not praying for me ? I must pray for myself.” Soon after the return of his parents, I had an appointment on a week day at the school-house near their dwelling. I was surprised to see the son remain with the class after preaching, not having heard of any unusual seriousness in his mind : indeed, I was almost tempted to pass by him in the class meeting, but finally spoke to him like this :—“ Thomas, can you tell us the state of your mind ?” What was my joyful surprise when he answered, *with flowing tears*, “ I feel that I am a sin-

ner." He soon found that Jesus came to save sinners ; and he is now preaching that blessed truth among the mountains of Vermont.*

Among my papers, written at this time, I find accounts of two remarkable circumstances which came to my knowledge then, although they happened long ago. These papers I will abridge and transcribe :—

"Mr. C., a revolutionary soldier, said, that when the Methodist preachers first visited his neighborhood, he was told they were sent by King George, to subjugate the Americans by religious influence, as he had failed to conquer them by force of arms. Mr. C. felt indignation rising up against them to such a degree that he was almost willing to shoot them ; but he thought he would hear for himself. He went to the place appointed for preaching : but, when the preacher drew near the house, Mr. C. began to tremble. 'What does this mean?' thought he ; 'I have faced the British red-coats without trembling, why do I tremble now?' But when the minister preached, he found, as he afterward expressed it, 'that it was not King George, but King Jesus, who had sent them.' Afterward, when a proposition was made for those who *wished to do so*, to join class for six months on

*A few months since he fell asleep in Jesus.


probation at first, Mr. C. exclaimed, 'I am no six-months' man; put me down for life.'

The other paper is entitled "The Contrast:" "During the revolutionary war, an American horseman, who was near the British army, observed a horse, belonging to a British officer, standing near a house; and, supposing the officer to be within, rode up, and when the Briton came out, presented his pistol, made him a prisoner, and led him off in triumph. It appears that, at the close of the war, this officer returned to his native country, but eventually emigrated to America. The war had closed, the noise of battle had ceased in the land, the zephyrs of peace moved gently over the hills and vales, and the doctrine of a free and full salvation was proclaimed among the people. Among others who embraced it by faith, was the American horseman whom we have mentioned. At length he commenced preaching the gospel of peace. In his travels he observed, at a certain place, a man deeply affected under the word. He partly recognized the man's countenance, but where or when he had seen him he could not tell. At the close of the meeting this man manifested a strong determination to serve the Lord, and to avail himself of the help which *Christians could render him.* Upon inquiry,

it appeared that he was the very man who, a few years before, was taken prisoner by the valiant American. What a *contrast* between the feelings of both parties on the former occasion and on the present? Who would not fight under the banner of Jesus?"

During the winter of 1830-31 there was a gracious revival of religion in that part of the circuit in which brother Pelton particularly labored, and brother Burton and myself had the pleasure of spending some of our time with him in the blessed work. The rich and the poor, the young and those advanced in life, were seen again and again bowing the knee together before the Lord, against whom they had sinned; and they found that "the same Lord over all is rich in mercy to all that call upon him."

A few months before I left Chatham circuit, we held what we termed a four-days' meeting in Chatham, in connection with the quarterly meeting. I had attended one on an adjoining circuit in the autumn previous, where there were no conversions, although several able ministers were there, and the people attended in considerable numbers. A memorandum, which I made at the time, of our meeting at Chatham, *reads as follows*:—"It began on Friday, with a sermon by brother Starks. On Friday even-



ing, when an invitation was given by brother Scholefield for mourners to come to the altar, three or four presented themselves, but one of them was led away immediately by her husband, Mr. W. On Saturday a powerful sermon, on sanctification, was preached. In the evening a number came to the altar. On sabbath our meeting was good, and penitents came forward both in the daytime and in the evening. Next day the presiding elder departed, and all the ministers, except brother Burton, a local preacher residing there, and myself. But God was with us. In the morning prayer meeting, one, who had been at the altar the evening before, told us that God had comforted her soul. This gave us much encouragement. Fervent prayer went up to heaven in behalf of the people, and meetings were held every evening through the week in that neighborhood, and a number of souls were converted before the ensuing sabbath. Among others Mr. W., who had led his wife away from the altar at the first evening of the meeting, professed to be converted, and, together with his wife, rejoiced in God. We also had a considerable ingathering of souls at East Nassau, where stated Methodist preaching was commenced anew after I went on to the circuit. I think that about fifty in

the first year, and not far from one hundred and twenty in the second, united with us in the different places on the circuit, including, in this last number, those who were received on probation in Nassau village, where brother Pelton chiefly labored.

Among those added to the Lord in this circuit, were a few who, I learned, thought that my preaching had been the particular instrument in the hands of God to bring them to Christ.

One of these, who has since gone rejoicing to glory, I beg leave to mention. His name was William Harvey Cox. He resided in East Nassau; and, if I rightly recollect, was nearly or quite the first subject of the revival I have just named. Long had his widowed mother and other pious friends prayed for the conversion of this amiable, hospitable young man. From his childhood he had been accustomed to minister unto the ambassadors of Christ. At length he heard a sermon from these words:—"Thou Capernaum, which art exalted to heaven, shalt be thrust down to hell;" in which the guilt and danger of those who misimprove great privileges were plainly set before the congregation. *His* conscience was affected, his heart *melted*, and he turned to the Lord and found

mercy. His companion, also, sought the great salvation, and obtained the blood-bought prize.

One of our quarterly meetings on this circuit was held in the grove, our church in that place being too small to accommodate all who were expected. The presiding elder was necessarily absent, but brother Lewis Pease came in his place, and, though in feeble health, preached to the multitude with great power. A lay brother, from White Plains, Westchester county, being present, was called upon to exhort after one of the sermons. He told of his pious, widowed mother, of her first connection with Methodism, of the opposition she met with from many, and of the thoughtlessness of her irreligious children. And then he told of her perseverance and her prayers, and of her children's conversion to God. These statements, and others which he made, gave force to his exhortations and interest to his remarks, and the Lord's people were much quickened.

In May, 1831, I closed my labors on Chatham circuit. I rejoice in the work wrought by the Lord during those two years; but I rejoice still more in what the Lord has since done among them at different times. When I visited them, about six years and a half afterward, I found that *not less than thirteen* new Methodist churches

had been erected in that time, in the section of country included in Chatham circuit when I went there to labor. To God be all the glory.

CONCLUSION.

SHOULD this simple narrative of the goodness of God to an unworthy worm prove, in the judgment of my brethren, in any degree useful to my fellow-men, and conducive to the glory of God, I *may*, at some future time, continue the narrative from the year 1831 to the present time. This would embrace an account of my labors in the counties of Columbia, Delaware, Schoharie, Greene, Albany, Westchester, Suffolk, and Queens, and in the Harlem mission in the upper part of the city and county of New-York. During those fifteen years I have been permitted to rejoice with my colleagues, on the different circuits where I have traveled, in the addition of about thirteen hundred to our religious societies. Let me close, by earnestly requesting every pious reader to pray fervently for the holiness, usefulness, and eternal salvation of the writer, and every member of his family.

MY DEAR BROTHER IN THE MINISTRY :

Permit the writer of the foregoing and following pages, who has been for many years an unworthy laborer in the vineyard of our blessed Lord, to entreat you never to be discouraged because your success has been no greater, and never to be satisfied with past success, though it be ever so abundant.

The minister who has toiled faithfully for a whole year and seen but one soul converted, when he looks at the weakness and unworthiness of the instrument, will wonder that such a glorious result as the salvation of *one* deathless spirit should have followed his labors. Yet let him inquire seriously, "Could I not have done more for God and for blood-bought souls? Could I not have obtained a larger measure of the Spirit to assist me in the great, glorious, and blessed work of saving souls from going down to everlasting woe?"

"O what eternal horrors hang
Around the second death."

"O, if I had but led *one* more to Christ, perhaps an eternity of bliss might have been the consequence to that soul." And if scores or hundreds have been given you recently, as seals of your ministry, still the question should be solemnly asked, "Have I done all I could?" And the prayer should be frequently and fervently offered, "Fill me, O my God, with the Holy Ghost. Help me by almighty power to 'turn many to righteousness,' who may forever 'shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father.'"

ELBERT OSBORN.

SING SING, N. Y., *March 4, 1865.*

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PART II.
EXTENDING FROM 1831 TO 1849.

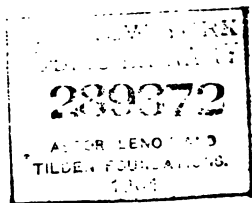


PASSAGES
IN THE
LIFE AND MINISTRY
OF
ELBERT OSBORN,

AN ITINERANT MINISTER OF THE METHODIST E. CHURCH,

ILLUSTRATING
THE PROVIDENCE AND GRACE OF GOD.
WRITTEN BY HIMSELF.

"HITHERTO HATH THE LORD HELPED ME."



Entered, according to act of Congress, in the year 1850,
BY ELBERT OSBORN,
in the Clerk's Office of the District Court of the Southern District
of New-York.

PREFACE.

IN October, 1847, a little book was published containing a sketch of some "Passages" of my personal history. The narrative was brought down to May, 1831. Several friends, who perused that sketch, have expressed a strong desire to have it continued to a later period. Having more confidence in their judgment in this matter than in my own, I have written a continuation of my narrative. The sale of the First Part has been much more extensive than I could reasonably have expected. To those who have taken the trouble to promote *the circulation of that little book*, I re-

turn my sincere thanks. Should they read the Second Part, it is my prayer that He who can use the weakest instruments to promote his blessed cause may make even this imperfect production a means of some benefit to their souls.

Although I have mentioned the names of many dear friends in these sketches, yet many other names equally dear have not been mentioned, lest I should be too prolix for endurance. May the names of all my dear friends be written in the Lamb's Book of Life. There, too, I humbly hope to find the name of

ELBERT OSBORN.

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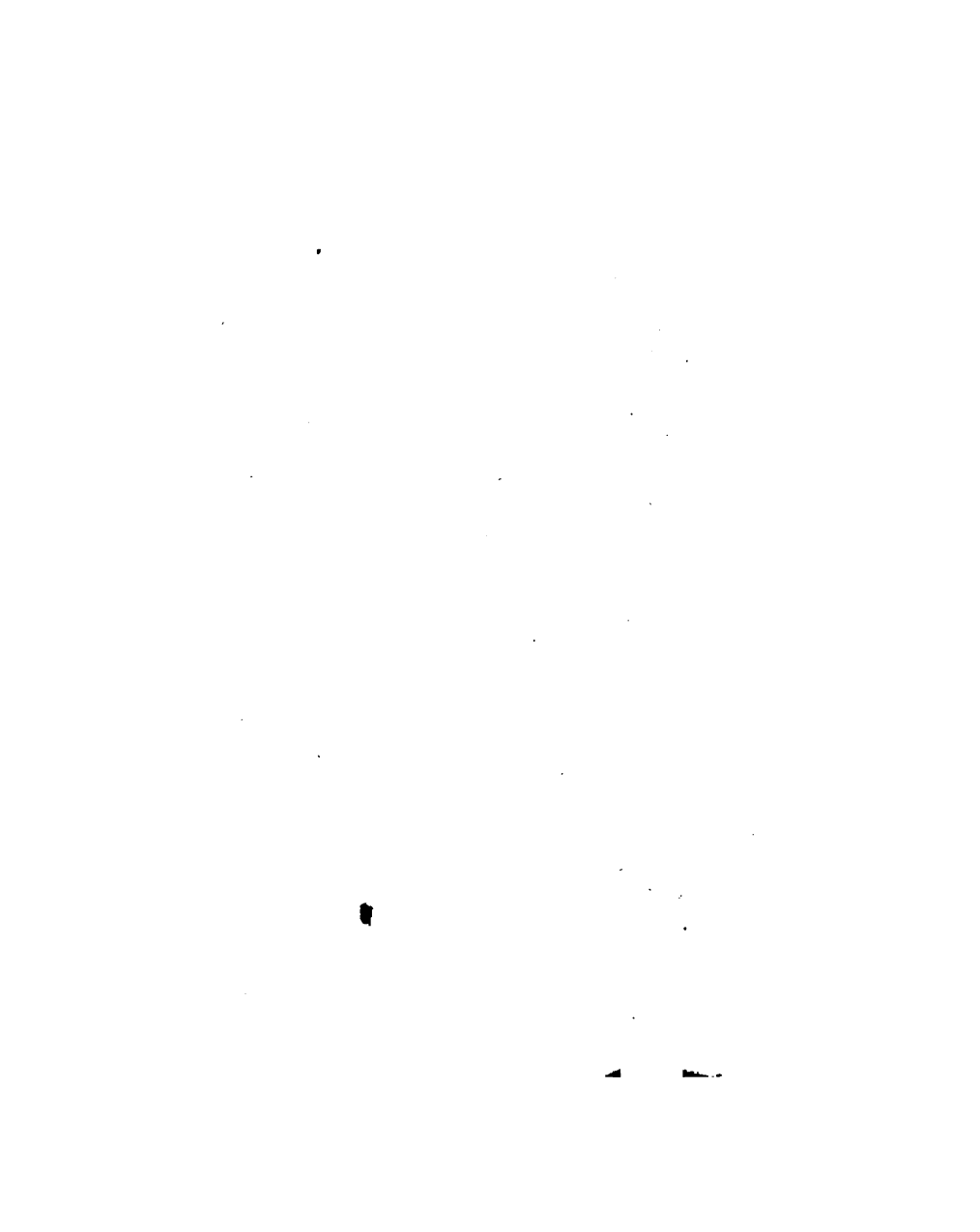
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PASSAGES IN THE LIFE
OF
ELBERT OSBORN.

PART II.

CHAPTER I.

GHEHT CIRCUIT.

At the session of the New-York Conference in Middletown, Conn., I received my appointment to Ghent circuit, in Columbia county, which embraced two societies that were included in Chatham circuit when I went there in 1829. A sermon, preached during the conference by Rev. J. J. Matthias, led me to resolve to preach more explicitly on the subject of holiness than I had done in former years.

Brother John Alley, a minister in the second year of his probation, was appointed from conference to this circuit with me ; but it was with the understanding that he should occupy a *portion of territory at the north end of the circuit.*

while I took charge of the remainder.* As there were more places which needed Sabbath preaching than I could possibly supply, we solicited and obtained the aid of two local preachers belonging to the circuit; namely, Rev. David Weager and Rev. Israel Northrop. These brethren alternated with myself at the different Sabbath appointments.

Soon after removing to this circuit, and while I was striving to put my good resolutions in practice by urging Christians to be pure in heart, and by visiting the unconverted at their own houses, I was invited by Rev. David Holmes to assist him in a four-days' meeting at Alford. I had begun already to rejoice in seeing some in-

* Mr. Alley was a man of noble appearance, and quite popular as a preacher; but, at the ensuing annual conference, he did not give full satisfaction to the committee in reference to the improvement of his mind in useful knowledge. Strong efforts were made by some to have him discontinued; but others (of whom I was one) urged the conference to try him another year, as we hoped for an improvement in knowledge, and also an increased zeal in the performance of pastoral duty. The reader will be pleased to learn that Mr. Alley was admitted into full connection at the ensuing conference; and, after laboring in Leicester, Wallingford, Pawlet, Dalton, Lansingburg, Poultney, Pittsford, Evans' Mills, Rome, and Oswego, he was elected bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church in Canada. His course, however, *was soon finished* in peace. May I meet him in the kingdom of God!

dications of the revival of God's work in my own circuit; but I knew that "he who would have friends must show himself friendly." Trusting that brothers Holmes and Starks would repay my feeble labors, I accepted the invitation. Alford is in Berkshire county, Mass., and lay a few miles east of the place of my residence. The morning of July 5th, 1831, was a delightful morning. While traveling over the hills and through the vales on my way to Alford, and meditating on the obstacles to a revival which existed in that place, I was much encouraged by these words being powerfully impressed upon my mind:—"The Lord of Hosts is with us, the God of Jacob is our refuge." At first the congregation was very small, and even some of the preachers who attended thought that but little good would be done at the meeting; but, on the evening of the second day, God manifested his awakening power at a meeting held by Rev. J. W. Belknap, about three miles from the church. On the next morning the people and preachers, who had worshiped in different neighborhoods on the previous evening, met at the church, and, with increased courage, pursued their blessed work.

One of our most efficient preachers was obliged to leave us that morning, but we felt that God

was with us. The number of mourners was increased, and the work of conversion commenced. In the evening I heard brother Holmes preach an excellent sermon, in a school-house about two miles north of the church. The discourse was followed by a most blessed class-meeting. The next day, which was the last day of the feast, we had a glorious and refreshing season. Notwithstanding the pressing business of the season among the farmers, the congregation was very large. About fifteen persons presented themselves for our prayers on that day, and six or seven professed to receive pardon during the meeting. Among these was Ann Husted, the youngest sister of two worthy ministers of the Methodist Episcopal Church. On the first day of the meeting two ministers called at the house of her father, who lived near the church, and learned, by inquiring of her, that she was the only unconverted child of her affectionate, pious parents. "Ann, this will never do," said one of the ministers; "you must seek the Saviour too." Ann followed this advice; and, on the last day of the meeting, with a joyful countenance, told me, just as she entered her father's house on her return from the church, that the Lord had blessed her soul. With joy, I told *her father* the good news soon after I had taken


my seat in his room. Presently the mother came in from another room. The father repeated to her what I had said; and she replied, with deep emotion, "Ann has just told me of it herself." "O!" said the father, with tears of joy streaming down his cheeks, "now we can say, 'As for us and our house, we will serve the Lord,' for God has converted all our dear children." I will just add, that after several years of faithful service in the cause of Christ, Ann left her friends below to join the happy millions above.*

One old gentleman, who had been a member of our Church for twenty-seven years, but, in consequence of some difficulties, had been out of the Church for the last ten years, was greatly blessed at this meeting; and, some time afterward, he, with his son and daughter, united with the Methodist Church. Brother Holmes was very grateful to God, at the close of the meeting, that the Lord had been so much better to the people than his fears. His colleague, brother D. Starks, whose conversion is mentioned on page

* February 22d, 1849. I have just seen, in to-day's Advocate, that this excellent man of God went home to a better world on the 24th of last month, after a protracted illness, in which he was graciously supported by the good hand of God. We trust that the joy of the father and daughter, when they met in that heavenly land, was far greater than even at the time of her conversion.

148 of Part I. of my narrative, was much rejoiced in seeing the work of the Lord begin to revive. I returned from this meeting encouraged to labor and pray for a revival in our circuit.

A quarterly meeting, held in brother Weager's barn about the first of September, and a camp-meeting, held a few days after, in Canaan, on the adjoining circuit, were means of preparing the way for revivals in our circuit. The quarterly meeting, though not held on the Sabbath, was well attended, and a few awakened sinners kneeled on the *barn floor* to seek the favor of Him who was once cradled in a manger. Some of these mourners found their way to the camp-meeting, and there obtained the pearl of great price. Two of them, at least, have since died in the Lord. One of them was the daughter of that man of God, Rev. Arnold Scholefield. She professed to be awakened under my feeble ministry, I understood, a short time before the quarterly meeting which I have mentioned. When she arose among the young converts, at the close of the camp-meeting, to testify of the goodness of God, her pious father covered his face and wept tears of gratitude and joy. The father and the daughter, *we trust*, are now rejoicing in that happy *world where* (to use the expression of a good



minister) joy is not such a stranger as to excite tears when we meet with it.

The quarterly meeting and the camp-meeting had, in some degree, prepared the way for a revival of religion. A four-days' meeting was appointed in the Union meeting-house, then standing in what is now called (I think) Hillsdale Centre; to commence in the forenoon of September 20th, 1831, and to be held four days, in the morning, afternoon, and evening of each day. At the commencement we had a very small congregation, although we had three or four preachers, and the weather was very fine. But we trusted in that God who is able to "save by many or by few." As the meeting progressed the congregation increased, until the house was well filled. Christians conversed personally with many individuals when the invitation was given for mourners to come to the altar. The sermons were often preceded, and still more frequently succeeded, by prayer-meeting. The evening of the third day was indeed a glorious season. The "strong crying" for mercy, uttered by awakened sinners, mingling with acclamations of praise from young converts and happy Christians, rendered it a very interesting scene. Seventeen or eighteen persons professed to find mercy during the four days of the meeting. One of these was the son

of a pious widow, whose daughter had been converted but a few days or weeks previous to this meeting. It would seem that both of these young persons were the fruits of God's blessing on what is sometimes called *personal effort*; for the mother said to the minister on the circuit, "Brother, your conversation with my children has done them more good than all the sermons which they ever heard."

The names of the ministers who labored with me in this meeting were David Holmes, D. Starks, J. Alley, R. M. Little, J. W. Belknap, C. Foss, and D. Weager. A commodious Methodist church has been erected in that neighborhood since I left that part of the country.

After the revival just described, I was permitted to spend a little time at protracted meetings in Chatham, Lenox, South Canaan, and the city of Hudson; and to behold, in each of those places, some manifestation of God's saving power. These seasons of mercy, together with occasional instances of awakening and conversion in different parts of the Ghent circuit, encouraged me to labor in hope of further outpourings of the Holy Spirit; and when some of the converts mentioned some sermon, exhortation, or word of *advice that had dropped from my stammering lips as the means of leading them to Christ, my*

heart was melted with gratitude to God for his condescension in working by such a feeble, unworthy instrument.

Trusting in the good Lord to help us, we appointed a four-days' meeting in the north part of Hillsdale, Columbia county, N. Y., at a place of worship known as the *Downing meeting-house*, to commence January 24th, 1832. Believing in the utility of combined and concentrated effort, I invited several brethren from adjoining circuits to "come over into" Hillsdale "and help us." As I had visited several of these brethren, and labored two or three days with each of them, they felt themselves under some obligation to comply with the invitation. The Rev. Messrs. Belknap, Foss, Little, Scholefield, and D. Starks assisted us at different periods of the meeting.

When the meeting commenced, we feared that none of these brethren would be with us, as the melting snow indicated that the traveling would probably be very unfavorable. This also made it very unlikely that the congregation would be large; yet I went to the place relying upon God, and in the afternoon meeting of the first day four persons arose to manifest a desire for the prayers of God's people, and in the evening seven or eight persons came to the mourners' bench. A favorable change of weather made the traveling agree-

able, and, after the first day, the congregation was quite large. We were favored with three sermons daily, and God's servants preached and exhorted in the demonstration of the Spirit; but, in order that the word should be fruitful, we saw the necessity of mingling prayer-meetings with the preaching.

On the fourth and last day of the meeting, although several had been brought into liberty, there were between twenty and thirty persons who presented themselves as seekers of pardoning mercy. While these weeping penitents were sitting together in front of the pulpit, Rev. A. Scholefield, in compliance with my request, preached to them and to the congregation. I have a vivid recollection of the solemn, pathetic, and appropriate manner in which that servant of the Lord addressed us from the words of the angel to the women weeping at the sepulchre:—"Fear not ye, for I know that ye seek Jesus which was crucified."

In the evening of that day we had prayer-meeting without preaching, although two or three ministers were present. Before the meeting commenced, several awakened persons took the mourners' bench; and one man, who had several times asked the prayers of Christians, *began to shout the praises of God in an early*

stage of the meeting. The work went on graciously ; and the young converts, who had found the Saviour but a day or two before, seemed to be the most successful in persuading sinners to come to Christ. Before the exercises of the evening closed, nine or ten were enabled to lay hold, by faith, on the promises of the Saviour. The whole number of converts, during the meeting, was estimated at about twenty-four, and others were brought in after the four-days' meeting had closed. Some of the subjects of the work are now, I trust, rejoicing in the kingdom of their Father. Some, too, of the brethren and sisters, who labored, wept, and prayed during that revival, are now resting from their labors in the mansions of bliss.

Before the conference met, in 1832, I was called to the severe trial of parting with a little son, nearly two years old, who died at Austerlitz in March. I had named him William Bramwell, out of respect to an eminent servant of God ; and I trust that when the body of William Bramwell shall come forth from his resting-place, in England, "to meet the Lord in the air," then also the body of my little child, fashioned after "the likeness of Christ's glorious body," shall leave his place of quiet repose to mingle with *the saints in light*.

CHAPTER II.

HILLSDALE CIRCUIT.

THE conference in New-York, in 1832, was the last that was held before the Troy Conference was set off from ours. At this conference Bishop Roberts, a man simple in his manners and apostolic in his zeal, presided. He now rests from his labors in paradise. At this conference I was appointed to the same circuit, and Rev. R. Hayter was sent to labor with me; but, as the society at Foster's meeting-house had been transferred from the Salisbury circuit to our circuit, (the name being changed from Ghent to Hillsdale,) we still needed the help of our local brethren, which they seemed willing to afford.

In the course of the summer and autumn, brother Hayter and myself were favored with some additions to the churches under our care. Among those who united with us, were a few who had long been members of other Christian Churches; but, being convinced that the doctrines, discipline, and usages of our Church were Scriptural, and that God was with us, they *believed it their duty* to cast in their lots with us. *One of these individuals had a brother who was*

a missionary in Ceylon, and another who was laboring in the same blessed work in the Sandwich Islands. As I lived one year under the same roof with him, we had many precious seasons together in conversation, singing, and prayer. A sister of his wife was one of the spiritual children that God gave me in that place. Our first quarterly meeting after conference was marked with much divine influence. Though disappointed in not seeing our beloved presiding elder, Rev. W. Jewett, in consequence of his illness, yet the Lord was near to help and to bless. Our love-feast was made very interesting by the presence and testimony of some young converts from Millville, a place at one extremity of the circuit. These young friends had come a distance of several miles with Henry L. Starks, then an exhorter in that place, but, for some years past, an acceptable minister in the Troy Conference.*

° One of the converts alluded to here was John B. Steves, a clerk in a store, who boarded in a public house where a colored Methodist domestic was employed. A minister went to the house to give religious advice to the Methodist employed there, and young Steves, seeing him enter, resolved he would go in also, that he might show his courage and wit in replying to the inquiries and remarks which he supposed would be addressed to him; but, after he entered the house, the kind words of the minister had such an effect on his heart as, by the divine blessing, resulted in his humble penitence and conversion to God. After several years of faith-

Being thus encouraged to labor for God, we were not unwilling to comply with the request of a beloved local preacher, H. Truesdell, (now resting in paradise,) to appoint a four-days' meeting at Hillsdale, in the Foster meeting-house, near which brother Truesdell resided. A similar meeting, held in the place by our predecessors about a year previous, had been the means of much good. Several young people professed to find mercy then, and we hoped for similar success. Some of the brethren, it is true, were fearful that certain difficulties, which could not be immediately removed, would prove insuperable impediments to the good work; and felt like the pious women, who sorrowfully inquired, "Who shall roll us away the stone from the door of the sepulchre?" But most of our friends seemed to hope that God would own and bless our efforts. Accordingly, we appointed the meeting to commence December 11th, and, a few days previous to its commencement, a sermon was preached, in which Christians were urged to help forward the cause of God. The society were requested to spend a short season daily in secret

fulness in serving God and his Church, he was called home to his eternal reward. Thus the minister, in discharging his duty to a poor colored Christian, was the means of bringing a soul to Christ who proved very useful in the Church.

prayer, specially imploring the blessing of God on the intended meeting. They were also advised to observe the Friday previous to the meeting as a day of fasting, or abstinence and prayer.

At the time appointed, we commenced the meeting in the name of our Master; yea, "in the name of our God we set up our banners." On the first day of the meeting, when an opportunity was given, three persons arose in the congregation to manifest their wish for the prayers of the pious. One of these had been serious for some time, and had, but a short time previous to this, manifested her serious desires in a similar manner. On the second and third days of the meeting, ministers from a distance came to our help. Under the labors of one of them, two persons, who had been comforting themselves with the hope that sin in this life would not harm them in another world, were convinced of the necessity of immediate repentance. Another minister, who was with us but two days, also had two souls given him as the fruit of his labors. One of these was a lawyer, who had thought himself quite a decent man; but was convinced, under the sermon of our brother, that he was, to use his own expression, "bad enough." This man, however, did not come to the altar till the *next week after his depravity had thus been*

exhibited to his own view. His pious, praying wife went to him in the congregation to entreat him to yield to the claims of duty and seek the Lord; and though he did not comply that evening, yet on the next he was seen among the penitents, and on the following evening was rejoicing in the Lord.

It was said that, during the first week of the meeting, one man remarked, in scorn, that it was "only a few weak women and children that went to the altar." However, some of these weeping seekers were comforted by the Most High. The first instance was a young woman, whose mother's funeral sermon I had preached in that house some months before. If I rightly remember, that funeral sermon was the means of awakening one of the neighbors. On the fourth evening of the meeting, after others had come to the altar, a little girl, about eleven or twelve years old, I should presume, came forward without any personal solicitation, and seemed to be in deep distress. Having been brought to Christ in childhood myself, I was peculiarly interested in her case. Leaning over the communion rail, that I might more distinctly hear her petitions while others were crying for mercy around her, I could hear her use expressions like these:—"Lord, *have mercy on me, a poor sinner!*" "Lord, I

have sinned a great while ; O have mercy on my soul !” Soon she was enabled to rejoice in the love of God. Then she wished to see her unconverted father, who was in the congregation. When he came, and heard her speak of the goodness of the Lord, his heart was melted, and he fell on his knees immediately, requesting prayer for his own soul. Two or three others found the pardoning love of God that evening ; one of whom, about two years afterward, in Delaware county, died happy in God.

On the morning of Saturday, which was the fifth day after the meeting commenced, it was a question in my mind whether it was my duty to remain in that place during the Sabbath with brother Truesdell, or go to the appointments on the other part of the circuit, where I was expected. I could send a young man to them, who would inform them of the cause of my absence, and assist them in their religious exercises. After consulting with a worthy brother in the ministry, who had been assisting us a few days, I followed his advice, and decided to remain during the Sabbath at the Foster meeting-house, where God was pouring out his Spirit upon the people ; and I believe this course proved to be for the glory of God. But after my beloved colleague, and all the other ministers from a dis-

tance, had departed, my mind was "in heaviness through manifold temptations." I feared that God would not continue the work. Never shall I forget the feelings of my heart while alone, alternately walking and kneeling in my chamber, in good old brother Parlee Foster's house. Thanks be to God! before the evening shades overspread the earth I was enabled to praise Him for victory.

The next day was a day of mercy. Among others who began to seek the Lord was a very amiable young married man, who, in the afternoon, left the gallery, and came through the whole congregation, to bow before the Lord. His elder brother, a merchant in the place, seeing him thus confess his desire for religion, was deeply impressed with a sense of his own sinfulness, and resolved to turn to the Lord. In the evening, while brother Truesdell was reading the hymn* before sermon, a young woman was awakened, who soon after found the Saviour. After the sermon on that evening new cases of awakening were made known, and men in middle life were seen kneeling as penitents before God.

The next day, which was stormy, was nevertheless very pleasant to me, because, as I passed from house to house through the storm, I found

* The hymn on the twentieth page of our old hymn-book.

several inquiring the way of salvation. During the week I was unable, through hoarseness, to preach a single sermon, and had but little help from any other minister, except the local preacher resident in the place ; yet we had a meeting each afternoon and evening, and the brethren, sisters, and young converts bore the cross for their Master. We also had a prayer-meeting every morning, for the benefit of those whose duties elsewhere would not permit them to attend at any other time. At one of these meetings the lawyer above-mentioned came, with his wife, to the place of prayer, and in the course of the meeting arose, and with much emotion told us that, on the preceding evening, for the first time in his life, he performed the duty of family prayer ; "and," said he, "from ten o'clock till one, we had a constant shower of mercy." His wife was filled to overflowing with gratitude to God ; and though not accustomed to shouting, she could not refrain from breaking forth at this time in loud acclamations of praise to God, who had answered her prayers. "I am but an infant in this school," said her husband ; "I am just learning the language of Canaan, and my friends must bear with my weakness." This morning prayer-meeting proved, indeed, an excellent school for the babes in Christ.

One man, who presented himself as a subject of prayer again and again, but did not find mercy, at length began to consider that he was living in the willful neglect of the important duty of family prayer. He resolved on the performance of this duty, notwithstanding he had several workmen, I believe, boarding in his family. The effort was made in the name of the Lord, and he was "blessed in the deed." At one of our morning prayer-meetings a pious lady, the wife of a merchant in the place, told us that her husband had resolved to come to the altar with the mourners on the preceding evening; but, having met with an accident which so injured his foot that he could not come to the meeting, he sent his request that we would remember him in our prayers. This we did most willingly, and also visited him at his own dwelling, and were permitted to rejoice in the belief that he found mercy.

The traveling, on account of mud and snow, was very unpleasant through most of the week. The village was not large, nor the vicinity very densely populated; yet, in the course of eight days, it was thought about thirty-four found the invaluable pearl. One man found the Saviour's love on his way home from church, who had that evening manifested his serious desires for the first time. As he drew near his house, the surround-

ing hills echoed with his shouts of praise. Our brother Johnson, (a class-leader in the place, and a brother-in-law to Bishop Hamline,) in view of what God was doing among some of his neighbors, whose conversion he had hardly dared to expect, exclaimed,—

“The day of wonders now has come,
The year of jubilee.”

On Saturday afternoon a devoted sister witnessed a good confession, as did many others on the same occasion; but her unconverted husband, who was present, soon left the house. The next day I saw him draw near the altar and throw himself into the arms of our good brother Westfield, anxious for his prayers. On the Tuesday evening following he prayed in our meeting, and spoke to the people something like this:—“I little thought last Saturday, when I left this house in such a state of mind as I then possessed, that I should be seen kneeling at the altar before the close of the next day.”

There were more than thirty penitents at one time collected around the altar. It is not very common that more males than females come forward as mourners during a revival, yet this was the case during this gracious work in Hillsdale. The meeting continued twenty days, and we had *new cases of individuals* almost daily who mani-

fested desires for religion. On the last day ten or eleven persons came to the altar, most of whom, however, had previously taken the same step.

Fifty-five persons, during the meeting, professed to find pardon, of whom seventeen were men who were heads of families. Thirty-seven of them united with the Methodist Episcopal Church on probation, and I pray God that I may meet them all in my heavenly Father's house. If any of those converted or reclaimed in that revival have since wandered from God, and if they should read these lines, it is my earnest prayer that, before they lay this little book out of their hands, they may fall on their knees before God, and cry, "Lord, save, or I perish! restore unto me the joys of thy salvation!"

The following ministers (and perhaps some others, whom I do not distinctly recollect) assisted brothers Hayter, Truesdell, and myself in this gracious revival, principally during the first week; namely, W. Jewett,* T. Sparks, J. Field, S. L. Stillman, D. Weager, H. W. Reed,† and

* Brother Jewett was presiding elder of the district at that time.

† Brother Reed had been licensed to preach on this circuit about a year, I think, before this revival. His kind father and mother then resided about four miles west of the Foster meeting-house. Their son Henry was employed, in 1832, by

H. Wetherwax. Some of the brethren and young converts from surrounding societies visited Hillsdale during this good revival, and labored with us. Among the young converts who were there, if I mistake not, were Jeremiah Ham and John Simpson. Both of them were brought to God during the preceding winter. This was in a revival in the eastern part of Claverack, at the *Martin school-house*. Brother Ham has been laboring as an itinerant minister in the New-York Conference since the conference of 1836. Brother Simpson was admitted on probation at the same time, but was immediately transferred to the Maine Conference, where he closed his toils, and endured the last of his sufferings, in Alfred, May 7th, 1843. On page 452 of the third volume of the bound Minutes, it is said that he had "a soul that burned for the salvation of a lost world." "He was a man who attempted no ostentatious display; but, meek and retiring, he sought only the honor that cometh from God. In several instances God honored him with gracious revivals." The presiding elder in Berkshire county, Mass. In 1833 he joined the New-York Conference; in 1835 he was transferred to the Illinois Conference, and has continued, I believe, to labor cheerfully amidst the privations of the *Far West* until the present time. Twice he has been a delegate to the General Conference, and for several years he has been presiding elder in *that part of the original Illinois Conference now forming the Iowa Conference*.

vals, and, during much of his ministry, with the sanctifying influences of the Spirit upon his soul." He "died in peace," and "lives with his Saviour." May all who labored with him on earth rest with him in paradise, and shine in the heavenly kingdom "as the stars, forever and ever."

There was another good work of religion in the northern part of Hillsdale, in the vicinity of the Downing meeting-house, which took place in the beginning of the year 1833. In this revival nearly twenty persons, including several heads of families, were brought to Christ; but the work was not as rapid as it was in the same place in the previous winter. The Rev. L. Pease (now in glory) rendered us very acceptable aid for a short time in this ingathering of souls.

CHAPTER III.

DELAWARE CIRCUIT.

At the conference of 1833, the authorities of the Church believed it most for the glory of God to direct me to a part of the country which I had never yet seen. I was sent to Delaware circuit. It embraced the towns of Delhi, Kortright, Franklin, Meredith, Bovina, and parts of the towns of Harpersfield, Hamden, Davenport, Sidney, and Stamford; all of it being in Delaware county, N. Y. After the revivals in Hillsdale circuit, which have been detailed, none will wonder that it was with feelings of sadness that I bid farewell to the dear friends in that part of the vineyard of the Lord; yet, believing fully in the utility of the itinerant plan among the ministers, I did not murmur either against God or my brethren. My mind had been, in some measure, prepared for the removal by a sermon preached at the conference in Poughkeepsie by that eminent servant of God, Dr. Wilbur Fisk, from these words:—"I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content." Phil. iv, 11. O! with what an apostolic spirit did the holy man of God *set before us the blessedness of the privi-*

lege of laboring *anywhere* in the cause of our glorious and merciful Master! That was the last sermon I ever heard from the lips of Wilbur Fisk, though he lived in this world of sorrow and toil more than five years after this before he took his upward flight. Often in subsequent years, when tempted to be disheartened by unpleasant circumstances in the places where I was preaching the gospel, the angelic countenance of brother Fisk, and the words of encouragement which proceeded from his lips, have been brought to my recollection, and made the means of enabling me to say—

“This work shall make my heart rejoice,
And spend the remnant of my days.”

Another sermon, preached at the same conference, had also a gracious influence on my mind. The preacher was our venerable Bishop Hedding, and the text was the seventeenth verse of the fourth chapter of Paul's Epistle to the Colossians. The duty of pastoral care and attention, in order to save Christians that were beginning to wander, was powerfully impressed upon the large body of ministers who were assembled at the conference. I shall never forget the earnestness with which he cried aloud, “*Save them if you can!—save them if you can!*” But he did not neglect to urge us also to cut off, ac-

ording to Discipline, those who could not be induced to return to the path of duty.

My removal from Hillsdale, with my family and furniture, to Delaware, was a somewhat tedious journey, in which we crossed the Hudson River, climbed the noble Catskill Mountains, and wound our way along the Schoharie and its branches, with lofty eminences crowned with majestic forests on either hand, till, after crossing over many other high ranges, we found ourselves at a little village called the Head of the Delaware. Here we saw the small beginning of that noble stream which pours itself by the city of Philadelphia, through the Delaware Bay, into the Atlantic Ocean. While riding along on this journey, going among strangers to preach Jesus, I often sung the lines ending with these words :—

“ My Saviour resides everywhere,
And can in all places give answer to prayer.”

This was a cheering thought to me, and I went on trusting in the Lord. It was about ninety miles from my residence in Hillsdale to that part of Delaware circuit where my family was to reside, and the whole of this journey had to be performed by land, and without the aid of steam. The kindness with which my colleague, Rev. *Solomon Fenton*, and the recording steward,

Aaron Gregory,* received me, was well calculated to rejoice my heart in this land of strangers. There had been a glorious revival on the eastern part of the circuit, in Bloomville society, in the town of Kortright; and there was a large number of probationers who needed much paternal care. My beloved colleague, having been with them during the revival in the preceding year, was very active and successful in assisting me to nourish these lambs of the flock. At one time I resorted to the expedient of inviting the young converts, who had found the Lord a few months before, to draw near the altar at the close of the sermon, and bow together at the same place where they had, not long before, wept and prayed for pardon, and rejoiced in the first beams of the sunlight of forgiving love.

When I went to the appointment in the central part of Davenport, on the north-west part of the circuit, I heard the voice of complaining. The society was in rather a low state, and some of them seemed disposed to find fault with the course of the preachers during the preceding winter. It was alleged that they had been so much taken up with the revival in Bloomville that Davenport had been neglected. I told them

** This worthy man afterward removed to the Far West, where he died in the Lord a few years since.*

that they must pray earnestly for God to revive his work there in such a powerful manner that the preachers would be constrained to omit some of their appointments at Bloomville in order to labor with them. As no information of my coming had reached the place before I went there, I had no congregation to address, but passed on to my next appointment, praying God to water that thirsty soil with showers of salvation.

Soon after this my colleague proposed that we should have an extra meeting in Davenport, to commence on Tuesday, June 25th, 1833. As he had labored on the circuit during one year, and was a man of prudence, I confided much in his judgment, and gave my assent to the proposal. Accordingly, when he went there to preach, he gave notice of the intended meeting.

On the morning of the appointed day, which proved to be a little rainy, I rode on horseback, over rough and hilly roads, twelve miles from my residence, in Franklin, to the place of meeting. It was a little past the hour when I arrived, but no signs of a collection of hearers were to be seen. When I inquired for the barn, which I had been told was obtained for the meeting, I found it was not prepared, and it was said that the school-house would probably accommodate *all who came the first day*. At the school-house

I met with one person only, an exhorter,* who had come several miles to worship God, and labor in his cause. We kneeled down, and united in solemn vocal prayer for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit; and then went to the house of a Christian friend, and invited him and his family to come to meeting in the afternoon. The weather having become fair, about twelve persons assembled in the afternoon; and to this little company I preached from Psalm cxviii, 8, on the duty and privilege of trusting in God. My remarks were specially directed to the importance of depending upon the Almighty for such weather and help as His infinite wisdom saw best for us on this occasion. Christians were also exhorted to trust in the Most High for divine influence to assist them and their ministers in laboring for souls during this meeting.

In the evening there were perhaps twenty or twenty-five persons present; and, if I mistake not, on that evening Rev. John Bangs came to our help. He had long been an active and bold soldier in the army of the Lord. He had many

* This exhorter was Obadiah W. Munger, a brother who was licensed to preach before I left that circuit, and labored faithfully as a local preacher till 1836. Then he was received on trial in the New-York Conference, and continued with us till the year 1842, when he joined the Rock River Conference, of which he is still, I believe, an efficient member.

spiritual children in different parts of Delaware, Schoharie, Otsego, and Greene counties. On that evening there were some tokens of good, and these increased during the next day; but on the second evening my mind, from some cause, was much depressed, and I was strongly tempted to regret that we had appointed the meeting. Nevertheless, on the following morning, in company with another minister, I visited a man whom I had seen at the meeting on the previous day. The tenderness of heart and deep seriousness which were manifested by this man and his wife encouraged me much; and I went to the barn, which was now prepared for our reception, to commence the forenoon-meeting. My beloved colleague, and some other faithful brethren in the ministry, had now arrived, the congregation was large, indications of awakening power began clearly to appear, and we saw that we had not trusted in God in vain. The seasons which I had witnessed in Hillsdale, Claverack, Alford, &c., rushed upon my recollection, and I began to have strong hopes that "I might have some fruit among" the people of Delaware county, "even as among" the inhabitants of other parts of the country.

The meeting increased in interest till Saturday, *when we gave an opportunity for the young con-*

verts to join our church on probation, and fourteen persons presented themselves for admission. The indications of good were so favorable that we thought it our duty to make arrangements for the continuance of the meeting over the Sabbath, especially as one or more ministers from a distance were able to spend the Sabbath in that place. My colleague and myself could not consistently neglect our appointments elsewhere on the circuit, nor conveniently send a substitute to them, so we left our brethren to go on with the work of their blessed Master; but we subsequently learned that God was present to help his servants during that holy Sabbath. On Monday additional help arrived, and the meetings were continued with much benefit to many souls. On the Saturday following I was able to visit them again, and spend the Sabbath with them.

• An immense congregation assembled, and in the evening the meeting was very powerful. In the mean time, our friends at Bloomville had to waive their privilege for one Sabbath. Thus, the loss of labor which the Davenport brethren had sustained during the previous winter, while the revival was in progress at Bloomville, began to be made up to them.

The following brethren in the ministry labored *with brother Fenton and myself in the course*

of this meeting :—John Bangs, Harvey Brown, Brownell, Cornwell, and Wm. M. Ferguson.* Yet I think neither of them was able to be with us more than two or three days.

Among others, who professed to be subjects of this good work, were a man and his wife, at whose house it was expected that a ball would have been attended on the 4th of July ; but the change which took place in their feelings prevented this. A few months after this revival, measures were adopted to build a house of worship there, in which I have since been permitted to preach the gospel of Christ. Many Christian friends, with whom I worshiped in the school-house, in the barn, and afterward in the church, in that place, I hope will meet me in the holy temple above.

While traveling on the Delaware circuit, I was permitted to form an acquaintance with two very old pilgrims. One of them, by the name of Jaquish, told me that he united with the Methodist society in New-York before the Revolution, when

* This young brother was licensed to preach by the quarterly conference of that circuit but a few weeks before this protracted meeting. After nine years labor as an itinerant minister in the New-York Conference, he finished his course in 1842, his last appointment being at Second-street church, in the city of New-York.

he was but a boy.* I presume, from his account, there were not thirty Methodists on the continent of America when he first united with them; and when I became acquainted with him there were more than *six hundred thousand* in the United States. The name of the other was Alexander Brush, a very pious man, who had formerly belonged to our Church in Comac, on Long Island, where he had frequently sat under the ministry of that son of thunder, Benjamin Abbott. When I have been tempted to despondency, through fear that there was more formality and less zeal in our Church than formerly, I have often been encouraged by recollecting what old father Brush told me of former times. He informed me that he scarcely ever heard any one shout the praises of God (except father Abbott) before he removed from Long Island to Delaware county, which was about the beginning of the present century. I think he added that he never heard a female pray in public before he left Long Island. I was led to believe that zeal and simplicity were not confined to the early days of Methodism. This remark should not weaken the confidence of any one in the accounts in Benj. Abbott's life; but then, as well as now,

* When but young he wandered from God, but at length returned to the fold of Christ.


there were places where Christians were not as zealous and active as they should be.

During the summer I attended camp-meetings with my brethren at Jefferson, Broome, and Colchester ; and have some reason to believe that at each of them God gave me one soul as a seal of my ministry. My attendance on these camp-meetings, and my labors on the circuit, (some parts of which were more than twenty miles distant from my residence,) called me away from my family a very considerable part of the time ; but, as we occupied part of a house owned by a very kind family, who resided in the other part, I had reason to believe that, in case of sudden illness, or any other painful accident that might happen during my absence, every possible effort would be used to make them comfortable. May the Almighty bless all who have cared for my family while I have been absent on my Master's business !

The "Life of John Smith," an English Methodist minister, was published about this time at our Book-Room, and providentially fell into my hands. The very good effect which this book had on my mind was increased by the testimony of two Christians, formerly residents in England, whom I met with soon after reading the book. *From personal observation, they were enabled*

to assure me of the correctness of the portrait of Mr. Smith, drawn by his éminent biographer. One of those friends, the Rev. Jesse Carley, who was himself a very humble, useful minister, has since gone to join the band of victorious Christian heroes in "the fields of the blessed." His body lies buried, with that of his pious companion, in the beautiful burying-ground at Huntington, Long Island.

During the latter part of this conference year we had additional instances of awakening and conversion in Davenport Centre. In another neighborhood also, called East Franklin, God sent a refreshing shower of grace. My dear brother Munger, whom I have already mentioned, lived not far from this place. He and his pious wife (now in paradise) were very willing to labor for God and for souls. We not only had meetings evening after evening, but, a part of the time, in the afternoon also. My own mind was deeply impressed with a sense of the necessity of being more earnestly and constantly engaged in prayer than I had been for the awakening of the unconverted. I believe there were about ten or eleven who found the Saviour in this place, and I hope to meet them all in the kingdom of God. "There is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner



that repenteth." I will here add, that not long before this revival in East Franklin, we had cause for rejoicing on account of some conversions in the same part of Davenport where there had been a gracious work in the preceding summer. "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits." I find, by referring to memoranda which I made at the time, that more than one hundred probationers were added to our societies during the first three months of my conference year on this circuit. Nevertheless, as the number received during the previous year was, I believe, about two hundred, it was not strange that several of them should be discontinued. In consequence of this, together with losses by removals, deaths, and expulsions, the net increase for the year was not much over one hundred.

In the early part of May, 1834, I set out to attend the conference in New-Haven. My journey across the country was rendered unpleasant by the snow, which fell that year very late in the spring. A sermon, preached during the conference by one of the bishops, impressed my mind deeply with the importance of pastoral visitation.

While I was in New-Haven I took occasion to look at some of the books in the extensive library of Yale College, and at the curiosities in its mineral cabinet. Before the conference closed, the

Legislature of the State assembled in that city. Here I was present at a ceremony which was a novel one to me. It was the inauguration of the governor of the State, a gentleman who has since, I believe, gone the way of all the earth.

"The tall, the wise, the reverend head,
Must lie as low as ours."

At this conference that eminent servant of the Lord, Charles Sherman, whom I have mentioned on page 96 of the First Part of my narrative, was transferred to the Troy Conference, and stationed in the city of Albany. He had been only four years in the itinerant ministry when he received this appointment. As he was leaving the conference room, he said to me, with much earnestness, "Pray for me, brother Osborn!" Humility was a distinguishing characteristic of that good and great man. From this conference I returned back to the same field of labor. Some portions of it had been set off to form other circuits, and the name was also changed to Bloomville circuit.

Not long after my return from conference, a new Methodist church, in the village of Franklin, was dedicated to the worship of Almighty God. This was followed by a series of meetings, which were owned of God in the conversion of several

souls. In this good work my colleague, the Rev. John M. Pease, (who had just been admitted on trial by the conference,) and myself, were assisted by Rev. Messrs. A. Peck, M. Marvin, W. Rounds, and B. W. Gorham, of the Oneida Conference, and Rev. David Terry, and perhaps others, of the New-York Conference. Brother Peck was a presiding elder in the Oneida Conference; and with him, and some of the other brethren, I had formed a pleasing acquaintance within the last fourteen months at different camp-meetings. Their labors were very acceptable and useful among us; and I hope that, in the great day of rejoicing, some souls from Franklin will rise up and call them blessed.

CHAPTER IV.

JEFFERSON CIRCUIT.

My next field of labor was Jefferson circuit, to which I was appointed at the conference held in Brooklyn in May, 1835. At that session Bishop Emory presided. I have a vivid recollection of the fervor with which he prayed for divine direction at the opening of the conference. This, I believe, was the only time at which that eminent servant of the Lord acted as the responsible president of the New-York Conference. His clear, discriminating mind, so well calculated to superintend the proceedings of a deliberative body, was soon called to explore, with admiration and delight, the arcana of the skies.

John Bangs and Reuben H. Bloomer were appointed with me to this six-weeks' circuit. Brother Bloomer was a probationer of the conference; but brother Bangs had long been blowing the gospel trumpet. Since I began to write this second part of my narrative, I have received the solemn tidings of his death. Little did I think, when I met him at the last conference, *that he was so near his end.* There he introduced me to that father in Israel, Abner Chase,

of the Genesee Conference, whose useful, interesting narrative, entitled "Recollections of the Past," I had lately perused. My high regard for our deceased brother leads me to ask the privilege of inserting a short account of him, written by my friend, Rev. S. D. Ferguson, and published in the *Christian Advocate and Journal* :

"Brother Bangs was born in Stratford, Connecticut, in 1781, but removed with his father's family to Stamford, Delaware county, N. Y., when he was only eleven years old. He continued to reside in this county until he concluded his apprenticeship to the business of a blacksmith, when he made a tour to Canada West. He returned, however, in about three months; and the following year was married, and removed to Kortright, in the same county, where he set up his business as a blacksmith, and resided over forty years.

"From the time he started for Canada, he was more or less under the continual awakening influence of the Holy Spirit. This was the result of the affectionate exhortation of a pious sister, as he was leaving for Canada. He had been much addicted to profanity, and the amusements of the ball-room; but he now found no rest to his troubled spirit. His wife also saw herself a sinner, and they began to seek the Lord together by prayer. Brother Bangs says, 'Glory to God! he was not slow to hear, nor impotent to save.'

"On one memorable Sabbath morning, while engaged for the first time in family prayer, my soul was set at perfect liberty, the evidence of which I have never lost.' Shortly after, his wife also found the Lord, to the joy of her heart, and continued faithful to God until called home.

"Brother Bangs soon felt such a burning desire for the salvation of souls, that he visited from house to house in the neighborhood, and exhorted sinners to flee from the wrath to come.

"He probably received license to preach in 1806, as his license was signed by Rev. Elijah Woolsey, and 1806 was brother Woolsey's last year on that district. But he might almost be said to have been a preacher from the time of his conversion to God. 'He was clad with zeal as a cloak,' and his labors were arduous and unremitting.

"After toiling in his shop during the week, (except when he was called to attend funerals, or the usual weekly prayer-meetings,) he usually rode from five to twenty miles on Sabbath mornings, preaching twice and meeting classes, and returned at night, to resume his toils on Monday morning.

"God blessed the labor of his hands, as well as his spiritual labors; and he soon found himself in possession of a competency for his temporal comfort, having accumulated about sixteen hundred dollars. But he was not entirely at ease with respect to his duty. He was strongly impressed to give himself wholly up to the work of the ministry; and when satisfied that the call was from God, although his situation was very pleasant, and his temporal prospects flattering, he joyfully shook hands with temporal comforts, and the sweet prospects of the world, that he might 'please Him who had chosen him to be a soldier.' Accordingly, in 1819, he applied in the usual way to the New-York Conference; and, together with G. Coles, N. Rice, Orrin Pier, and the writer, was received on trial as a traveling preacher.

"While a *local* preacher, he was scarcely excelled in extent of labor by any traveling preacher, while many fell far behind him. But now that he gave himself up wholly to the work of the ministry, his zeal was almost unbounded, and he plunged into the fight with all his soul. His estimate of ministerial character was high. He felt that, for himself, holiness was indispensable; and, walking in its pure light, he urged it on his brethren in the ministry, and proclaimed it to the Church of God as the privilege of all saints.

"*He had not enjoyed early literary advantages; but, 'endued with power from on high,' his labors were greatly blessed*

of God. Many were the seals of his apostleship in the Lord. During the time he traveled as an effective preacher, there were received into the Church, on the circuits where he traveled, by himself and his colleagues, about three thousand souls. He fixed his eye on every part of the great ministerial work. The sick were visited, delinquents were sought out, the languishing class stirred up and encouraged, divisions healed, and the dilapidated or unfinished church repaired or finished through his instrumentality. Thus he continued for sixteen years, sacrificing ease, the comforts of home, property, yea, all that was dear to him of an earthly nature, that he might win souls.

"So little did he receive for his labors on the different circuits where he traveled, that when he became supernumerary he found almost all his hard earnings used up in support of his family. I recollect there were some expressions of dissatisfaction at his receiving his dividend of the fifth collection at conference, after he became supernumerary; but this was because his real circumstances were not known. The fact is, he laid all on the altar when he offered himself to travel, and all has been consumed. Brother Bangs died without property. For several years past he has labored principally for the benefit of children, gathering them together, obtaining their signatures for the pledge prohibiting the use of strong drink, tobacco, &c.; distributing books, papers, &c., for their benefit; exhorting, and praying with and for them. Many thousands of children have taken the pledge, and many of them have been converted to God, by means of these labors.

"To this work of faith brother Bangs fell a martyr. He was taken, in June last, with diarrhoea, but continued to labor on, week after week, with disease upon him, still anxious, as he ever was, to meet his appointments, until his disease, which, by rest and proper remedies, might have been arrested, became chronic, and bid defiance to remedies.

"About a week before his death, brother Pendell and my-

self were sent for to visit him; but he told us, in the letter he sent us, that for him to die was gain. As brother Pendell was quite indisposed in body, I hastened alone to his bedside, and found him very feeble, but trusting firmly in the Lord. His mind was still on his work; and he expressed some desire, if it were the will of the Lord, to work a little more for God; but still said, 'The will of God be done.' But the Master said, It is enough; come up higher.

"He lingered on until Sunday, February 4th, [1849,] when he gently fell asleep, not to awake again until the first resurrection. At his request, his body was conveyed to Harpersfield, at the head of the Delaware, where a numerous concourse of old friends and acquaintances assembled to convey it to its last resting-place, by the side of his former wife, after a sermon on 2 Tim. iv, 7, 8.

"Brother Bangs was a man of strong views and feelings, of undaunted courage, of pure intentions, and of a tender, warm, and friendly heart. He suffered much affliction in the sickness and death of many of his children, and the loved companion of his youth; but in all this he murmured not, nor complained. His latter days were cheered by the affectionate assiduities of his pious, amiable, and intelligent second wife, who is now his bereaved widow. Two of his sons, and his beloved daughter, were with him to close his eyes, and commit him to the tomb. 'Servant of God, well done!'

"S. D. FERGUSON."

It would have been a great trial to me to be appointed to the *charge* of this circuit with a minister so many years my senior as was brother Bangs, had I not known that it was his wish to be excused from this onerous responsibility, I *believe* on account of the infirmities of advanced *years*. Soon after my removal to the circuit,


these brethren providentially met with me in the street, a mile or two from my residence. Here we conversed together, arranged our plans, and encouraged each other to labor faithfully, with all our might, to pull down the kingdom of darkness.

On the Charlotte circuit, immediately adjacent to ours, a good brother labored, by the name of Oliff G. Hedstrom, now well known to many as the indefatigable missionary at the Bethel ship of the North River mission, in the city of New-York, where he preaches Jesus to emigrants and sailors from Sweden and Norway. Sweden is his native land, but America his birth-place by spiritual regeneration. The year 1835 was the first of his itinerant labors, and the transition was great from his lucrative business and religious privileges in the city of New-York, to the forest-clad hills of Delaware county. The first interview I had with him was at his own house, where I called on him as I was on my way to a camp-meeting in Maryland, in the bounds of the Oneida Conference. Having heard of him and of his remarkable conversion, I was much pleased to have him appointed to a circuit adjacent to Jefferson circuit, which had now become my field of labor. At this interview I invited him to *accompany me to the camp-meeting*. At first he

excused himself, as he expected that both the preachers and people would be strangers to him, although it was only a few miles from his circuit and residence. From my acquaintance with the presiding elder, Rev. Andrew Peck, and other preachers in that vicinity, I could assure him that he would soon find himself at home among them. Accordingly, on the next day after my arrival on the ground, I had the pleasure of seeing him there also, and very soon heard his voice in the prayer-meeting. It was believed that, before the camp-meeting closed, fifty or sixty were brought out of darkness into the blessed light of pardoning love.

. Some time in July, brother Hedstrom held a meeting in a barn in the north part of Davenport, about eleven miles from my residence in Harpersfield. I was present by his request, and was happy to meet my dear brethren J. Bangs and D. Starks there. The blessed Redeemer, who was once cradled in a manger, condescended to meet with us in much mercy in the barn, and several were converted to God. Among the converts, if I mistake not, was one who has since been, for several years, the pious companion of a preacher in the New-York Conference.

I think it was on Monday, August 3d, that a messenger arrived at my house, from the friends



residing in Charlotteville, requesting me to go over and visit them, as God had begun a gracious work there. With joy and gratitude I received these tidings. My soul was truly thankful to learn that the fire of reformation was kindling in our circuit, as well as in other places. Two sermons, which had recently been preached there, appeared to produce powerful effects. One was from brother Hedstrom, and the other from Rev. Calvin Hawley, of the Westford circuit, in the Oneida Conference. Brother Hawley had preached there on the day previous to the coming of the brother who was sent for me, and he had the pleasure of seeing several persons manifest a desire to flee the wrath to come. His duties on his own circuit compelled him to leave them, however, the next day, and of course I did not see him at that time, although I went with the messenger "without gainsaying as soon as I was sent for." That week was a season of great mercy to the people of Charlotteville. We had some ministerial help from abroad; and though it was a very busy season with the people in that place, who were mostly farmers, yet, evening after evening, they collected in the church to hear the word of the Lord. The pious wife rejoiced with her repenting husband; and the *Christian who had for seventeen years been pray-*

ing for his father, saw that father bowing at the mourners' bench, a place which he had once despised. The minister of the gospel, in one instance, was called up from his bed at night to pray with the mourner. The servants of the Lord warned the people "publicly, and from house to house." It was thought that, in the course of one week, about twenty persons in that neighborhood found peace in believing. How many more turned to the Lord after that, I do not, at this distance of time, recollect, nor have I now any means of ascertaining; neither do I know how many of the converts in that revival have gone before to the heavenly city, nor how many of them may have gone away from the Saviour. If there be any of the latter class now living, I pray that He who looked upon back-slidden Peter may look them into deep contrition of spirit. Joseph Hartwell, William S. Stilwell, and Nathan T. Shaler were then exhorters in that vicinity. The first is now laboring as a minister in Utica, N. Y.; the second is engaged in the same blessed work in Great Barrington, Mass.; and the third has been for some time, I believe, proclaiming Jesus to the Red Men of the West, far beyond the Mississippi.*

* *Esra S. Cook* was licensed to exhort during this year, and *Charles Gorae* soon afterward, I believe. They both re-


Four weeks after I went to Charlottesville, to render my feeble help there, my dear brethren Bangs and Bloomer commenced a protracted meeting in a place called Summit Four Corners, about five miles from Charlottesville. This was according to previous arrangement between them and me.

I was absent in the city of Albany for a few days, visiting some dear friends, and the Troy Conference, then in session at that place. On that occasion I saw, for the last time, my dear friend Arnold Scholefield, whom I have frequently mentioned, and Bishop Emory, who presided in the conference with mingled kindness and dignity. Both of these ambassadors of Christ were called away suddenly to their reward not very long after I saw them in Albany.

I came directly from that city to Summit, to meet my colleagues at the protracted meeting. Their first meeting was held in the school-house, in the evening, as there was then no church in the place. Next day they met in the grove near by, according to previous appointment, where seats had been prepared. Two sermons had been preached on that day before I reached the

sided in this circuit at that time, and both of them have since labored several years as itinerant ministers in the *New-York Conference*.

place, the second one by Rev. D. Starks. Brother Bangs was following that sermon with an exhortation when I drew near the grove. I looked down, from a little eminence in the road, upon the small company of worshipers, assembled in the open air, though the weather was uncomfortably cool and windy. As I beheld them in this situation, and our aged brother Bangs, with head uncovered, addressing them from a temporary stand, (perhaps it was a wagon,) I was strongly tempted to look upon our enterprise as unwise and visionary; but when I reached the little company, I soon perceived that there were some *warm hearts* among them, although the air was so uncomfortable. In the evening we met in the school-house, (as we had no tent in the forest,) and, to our joy, three or four young persons presented themselves as subjects of our intercessions. Next day we were very thankful to see brother C. Hawley with us. The reader will remember that his labors had been abundantly blessed in the commencement of the good work at Charlottesville. Some of the young converts from that place were with us at this meeting, and they rejoiced with us to see our brother once more. A sermon which he *preached* in the grove, from John xii, 35, produced a very gracious effect. On the next day



(Thursday) another dear brother, who had also been with us at Charlotteville, came to our help. This was brother Hedstrom. Our meeting on Thursday evening was held in the grove, as the weather had become mild, and the people appeared disposed to keep good order ; and, on the same evening, another meeting was held in a school-house two or three miles distant, which I attended. Both of these meetings were honored with displays of divine mercy and power, but especially the meeting in the grove. Two men, who had been resting on the vain hope that all mankind would be unconditionally saved, came humbly before the Lord as penitent seekers of salvation. The number of mourners increased, and several conversions took place that evening. On Friday and Saturday we worshiped in the grove morning, afternoon, and evening. On Saturday evening, though our brethren in the ministry from a distance had returned to their work, yet the Lord remained with us, and new cases of awakening and conversion gladdened our hearts. If I rightly remember, arrangements were made so as to have brothers Bangs and Bloomer with us on the Sabbath. I believe one or more of the local preachers consented to fill at least a part of our appointments in the other *part of the circuit*. We also had assistance from

four or five local preachers, who were present more or less during the meeting. On that blessed Sabbath more than fifty persons, of whom several were heads of families, came to the mourners' benches; and twelve or fourteen, in the course of the day, professed to find peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. The whole number of converts during the meeting was supposed to be near, if not quite forty; and the work continued to go on after the meeting in the grove was brought to a close.

A quarterly meeting, held by our presiding elder, Rev. N. White, about five miles from Summit Four Corners, on the following Sabbath, was a season of refreshing from the presence of the Lord. Several professed to find the favor of King Jesus, and many went away mourning on account of their sins.

Among the numerous conversions which took place in the revival at Summit, that I have been describing, there were two which I will more particularly notice. One of these was a man, of very good standing in society, who had looked upon the ministers of the gospel with a good deal of contempt, especially when they went from house to house, warning the people to flee *from the wrath* to come. This contempt he expressed to a minister once, at least, in strong

terms. But the truth of God reached his heart; and on a certain evening, when the invitation was given for awakened sinners to come forward and kneel before the Lord, he came with trembling, and though he was dressed in very good apparel, he was about to kneel down on the bare earth. Some friend said to him, "Here we have spread straw, on which you can kneel." "*Any* place is good enough for me," said the humbled sinner; and he soon found the promise verified:—"He that humbleth himself shall be exalted."

Another of the converts was a man who had a pious wife, and they had recently been called to bury a beloved infant child. At the protracted meeting he appeared very serious, and was personally invited to come out from the world and decidedly choose the Lord for his portion; but he declined. He was then urged to commence praying in secret on that very day. The next time that I met him the inquiry was made of him, "Have you prayed in secret since I conversed with you?" He replied in the negative, and I expostulated with him for his neglect. On the Sabbath which I have mentioned as a day of God's great mercy and power, manifested in the grove, he took up his cross, and was one of the large number that came forward to seek the Lord; but he left the place mourning. In the

evening he went to a religious meeting again, but returned sorrowful. After his return home his wife said, "Shall we have prayers?" He replied, "You may pray!" and she did so. He followed in vocal prayer; and about midnight, while they were calling upon God, he shed abroad his love in the poor mourner's heart. On Tuesday following I went into the neighborhood, and heard the good news that the dead was alive, and the lost was found. I rode up to his door, and meeting his wife, congratulated her upon the good work which had lately been wrought by God in the heart of her husband, and also of her father. Her joy was full. When I inquired for her companion, she pointed to a house near by, from whence I saw him coming with hasty steps. As he drew near, he exclaimed, with great emotion, extending his arms, "I am coming, and I am going to heaven with you!" Tears of joy ran from his eyes, and from mine, while I sat upon my horse and listened to the language of this babe in Christ. "Now," said he, "I am willing to converse with you on the subject of religion; but once I wished to avoid all conversation of that kind." How blessed the hope, which he could now cherish, of meeting the spirit of his deceased infant child in the regions of *immortal blessedness*.

I think that it was in the course of this revival that a minister visited B. G., a man of property and influence in the town. He was much affected with a sense of his lost condition, but neglected to seek the Lord with all his heart. A year or two afterwards another faithful minister, who was laboring in that circuit, visited him. The Spirit of truth moved upon the heart of Mr. G. He began to declare his iniquity, and to be truly sorry for his sin. He saw that he had been very ungrateful to God, who had sent his Spirit and his messengers to lead him to Christ. "That man of God, * * * *," said he, "came to see me, and prayed with me; and while he was praying for me he dropped a tear *there*," pointing to the very spot where it had fallen, a year or more before this conversation. But though he had been stubborn and rebellious, yet now he was willing to submit to God; and seeking salvation in the Lord's way, he did not seek in vain. Since that gracious revival took place, a Methodist church has been erected there; and my prayer is, that God may always have a holy and happy people in that place.

Very soon after our blessed meeting in the grove at Summit, we held a protracted meeting in the Methodist church in the south part of *Jefferson, Schoharie county, N. Y.* This church

(in contradistinction from one more recently built in the north part of the town) was called the "*old church*." Both of my colleagues attended, together with some local preachers in the vicinity. We also received some assistance from Rev. Messrs. N. White, D. Starks, G. Horton, O. G. Hedstrom, S. M. Knapp, and A. Bronson; all of whom, except brother White, our beloved presiding elder, were laboring on circuits adjacent to the Jefferson circuit. In this neighborhood I found some persons who were the lineal descendants of the brother or sister of that holy, humble, zealous man of God, David Brainard. Some of them had long been pious Christians, and I believe others of them were brought to God in this revival.

The whole number of converts in this work I judged to be about twenty. One of them was a man who had said that his horse-shed, which stood near the church, was free for the horse of any minister except one,—that was John Bangs; but so changed did his feelings become, that he cheerfully welcomed that ambassador of Jesus to his hospitality. Another of the converts was a man about seventy-five years of age, whose pious companion and children had long mourned over his neglect of Christ, and his almost total *inattention* to the means of grace. Though fa-

vored with very good health, and living near the church, he was scarcely ever seen there, except on a funeral occasion. Never shall I forget the expressive look of his son, the recording steward of the circuit, when, in a prayer-meeting held in the early part of the protracted meeting, he fixed his tearful eye upon me, and said, "O, brother Osborn, pray for my dear father!" Equally vivid is my recollection of the pathetic, solemn manner in which one of our ministers addressed the old gentleman in conversation at his own house. Great was our joy, shortly after this, to see him, with locks white as the snows of winter, enter the sanctuary of the Lord. Still greater was our joy when he rose up, with other awakened sinners, to let us know that he wished us to pray for him; but after this, when he rose from his knees and shouted the praises of God, who, for Christ's sake, had pardoned his numerous sins, our joy and gratitude were unspeakable. This affecting scene took place almost on the same spot where, but a few days before, his pious son had uttered the affecting request which I have already mentioned. After this the good old man was ready to walk several miles, in the depth of winter, to meet with the people of God. Even his Christian relatives, who had long mourned *because he had no disposition to go to the house*

of prayer, now almost thought that he was going beyond his strength, in his eagerness to visit the place of worship. In subsequent years, when far from the lovely vale in which the happy old man resided, I have often inquired concerning his religious state, of persons from that vicinity who were providentially thrown in my way ; and as often have I been rejoiced to learn that he was pressing on toward the holy temple above.

There is a neighborhood in the eastern part of Summit known by the name of Dutch Hill, many of the inhabitants being descendants of emigrants from Germany and Holland, and the language of their fathers was still used to some extent in their common conversation. At this place a quarterly meeting had been held in the early part of the summer of 1835. The presiding elder had just commenced his labors on the district, having been appointed, for the first time, to this responsible station at the conference but a few weeks previous. Some peculiar circumstances connected with his appointment, caused him to feel much depressed in spirit. Yet he labored faithfully and usefully among us at the quarterly meeting ; and some expressions which he used in prayer were made a blessing to me, *and produced a lasting impression on my mind.*

November 17th, at ten o'clock A. M., accord-

ing to previous appointment, we commenced a series of meetings at the Methodist church on Dutch Hill. Thirteen persons composed the whole of the congregation, to whom I endeavored to preach from the question proposed by God to Abraham, as recorded Genesis xviii, 14 : "Is anything too hard for the Lord?" The omnipotence of God was presented as the ground of encouragement to Christians to labor in faith and hope for the salvation of the unconverted. No other minister but myself was present when we commenced our meeting; but in the course of the day and evening three other ministers arrived. In the evening a few females came to the altar for prayers, and some of them were enabled to believe unto the saving of the soul. Every day during the week some professed to find the blessing of pardon, although the congregation was not large till Saturday evening. On that evening the number of mourners was quite large, and more of them were males than females. On the Sabbath the house was very full; and when a request was made that all who thought they had received pardon within a week should take seats together in a particular part of the church, thirty-seven persons took the seats designated. On the same day thirty-eight persons *offered themselves as probationers to our church.*

Next week, though the weather was stormy and cold, the work went on till the number of probationers amounted to fifty-five, including a few who resided within the bounds of adjacent classes. H. Brown, R. Kelley, D. Starks, O. G. Hedstrom, — Robison, H. Tredwell, and A. Bronson, kindly co-operated with my colleagues (Bangs and Bloomer) and myself in striving to promote this revival. Should this sketch fall into the hands of any one who obtained mercy in that revival, and has since departed from the good way, may this record of the names of my brethren who there declared the counsel of God, prove the means of calling that wandering soul back to God.

A sermon, preached during the meeting by Harvey Brown, and an exhortation from brother Hedstrom, which followed it, had a melting influence on many hearts. Brother H. came in, I think, just after brother B. had commenced the service. The sermon was impressive, and brother H. was evidently much affected. He was unknown, I presume, at that time to most of the congregation. By my request he ascended the pulpit, and, with deep emotion depicted in his countenance, began to exhort:—"I have been *thinking*," said he, "that if such a sermon as we *have just heard* could be preached to my coun-

trymen on the rocky shores of Sweden, what multitudes would turn to the Lord!" The foreign accent of the stranger, and the deep feeling manifest in the intonations of his voice, instantly attracted the attention of the whole congregation; and scarcely had he uttered the short sentence which I have just quoted, before it seemed that nearly every one in the house was melted into tears.

It is good to "remember the years of the right hand of the Most High;" but how solemn the thought, that many of those who wept under that sermon and exhortation have probably since that gone to the world of spirits, and possibly some of them continued to resist the Holy Spirit till they went down to the world of woe to weep unavailing tears, where hope can never come.

On the 12th and 13th of December, 1835, a quarterly meeting was held in the lower part of Davenport, in Mr. Hedstrom's circuit. It was held in a building which had been occupied in the business of tanning and currying leather. Of course it was not a very pleasant place for a large worshipping assembly. But I suppose that it was the best that could then be obtained in the neighborhood; and Mr. White, the presiding elder, as well as Mr. Hedstrom, doubtless felt *that they were successors of the pioneers of*

Methodism, who worshiped and labored in a sail-loft before a Methodist church was built in America. God helped his servants; solemnity seemed to rest on the congregation; but none of them seemed willing to make known his serious desires by any overt act. With many tears and prayers, arrangements were made to hold a protracted meeting, commencing on the twenty-fourth of the same month. The weather and traveling were both unfavorable; but the Lord sent some of his ministers to labor with Mr. H. On Sabbath, the 27th, although there had been indications of good, yet there seemed to be a cloud over the prospects of the meeting for a season; but at length faith and prayer prevailed, and the good work went on graciously. On Tuesday I was obliged to leave them; but other ministers came to labor with them, and the people assembled each day and evening through that week, and several evenings of the following week. About forty persons were thought to be brought to Christ through the instrumentality of that protracted meeting. On the last day, though it was stormy, so as to prevent a full attendance of the converts, yet eighteen joined society.

In the course of that winter I was permitted to attend protracted meetings with other ministers, at Byrneville and Jefferson New Church,

within our own circuit ; and also at Hobart, in brother Starks' charge ; and Prattsville, where my former colleague, J. M. Pease, was laboring. At all of these meetings some professed to find the Lord, although the depth of snow and the severity of the cold during that winter rendered it quite unpleasant for many to attend. In a few instances I preached at five o'clock in the morning ; and some of those meetings, held before the break of day on cold winter mornings, are remembered by me with gratitude, as seasons of peculiar blessedness to my soul. When the time arrived for the commencement of our meeting at Byrneville, I was at the house of our brother whom I have mentioned on a preceding page as having said, when about to kneel as a penitent before the Lord, "Any place is good enough for me." Such a severe snow-storm came on that I was obliged to remain with him two nights and the intervening day, and in that time the snow fell to a depth that was rarely known even in that mountainous country. As soon as the storm subsided, I prepared to go to Byrneville. During that preparation a man rode up to the door on horseback with a message from my respected colleague, J. Bangs, for me to come to Byrneville. This man was the same person *whom I have before mentioned as having said to*

me, with uplifted hands, as he met me in the street a day or two after his conversion, "I am going to heaven with you." He, with other friends, volunteered to go before, on horseback, to break a path for me to go through with my sleigh. He remarked that I had helped him through last autumn when he was in trouble on account of his sin, and now he would gladly help me through the deep snow. Thus he expressed his gratitude to the unworthy instrument whom God had used to assist in leading him to Christ.

The depth of snow was uncommon that winter; so much so, that I found it necessary sometimes to travel twenty-four miles by a circuitous route *around* the hills to reach an appointment which was not more than twelve miles distant by the usual route. In one case, when I met a man with two horses and a lumber-sled, the snow was so very deep on either side of the path that neither of us dared to give half the road, lest the horse should get swamped in the snow. We concluded to resort to this expedient. Taking the loose boards from his sled, and laying them down by the side of the path on the snow, we formed a temporary floor. Then, taking my horse from the sleigh, we led him carefully on *this floor*, where we kept him standing till my *sleigh* could be removed by hand out of the

path, and thus an opportunity was given for my friend to pass by with his team. Then the horse and sleigh were brought back into the path and again fastened together, the boards were replaced on the lumber-sled, and we went on our way rejoicing, having cause to be thankful to the Almighty "Preserver of men."

The conference year did not pass without some severe trials, resulting from difficulties between a few brethren who stood high in the confidence of many, and who appeared to manifest friendship for me to the last. How painful are such things, whenever they occur!

There were also a few cases of transgression, which made it necessary to execute the discipline of the Church; but we had cause to be very grateful to our Heavenly Father that many more were added to the Church than were lost by removals, &c. Not only in the places which I have mentioned, but in other parts of the circuit, there were some manifestations of divine mercy. Harpersfield, where I resided, surrounded by kind friends and neighbors, was not entirely forgotten by our prayer-hearing God; as some in that place, during the year, were enabled to sing the new song. On this circuit, many of the brethren and sisters were efficient helpers in *the work of the Lord*. By reference to a letter

of mine, dated February 15th, 1836, I find that, in less than nine months previous to that time, more than two hundred had been received on probation in the different societies of the Jefferson circuit.

CHAPTER V.

WINDHAM CIRCUIT.

some time previous to the session of our conference in 1836, I had frequently thought perhaps it would be more for the glory of and the good of souls if ministers were more frequently removed to a new field of labor at the end of one year, instead of continuing two years in the same place. Seeing the good effects of itinerant ministry in our Church, I was led to consider whether the benefit might not be increased if such changes occurred more frequently, as I observed they did in the earlier days of American Methodism. At length I came to the resolution I would ask my presiding elder to use his influence to effect my removal to another part of the vineyard of the Lord at the end of one year's labor on Jefferson circuit. I did not ask for an easier, richer, or more pleasant place, but only to be removed. In this matter I was not influenced by the idea that there would be a dearth of subjects for sermons. I was given to understand that the brethren on the circuit would be glad to have me remain with them, *I had always been re-appointed to the same*

circuit the second year from the time I joined the conference till this time. But my views of duty led me to persist in this request.

Accordingly, my appointment was made to Windham circuit, which included Windham, Hunter, and Lexington. My colleague was brother Goodrich Horton, who was, at this conference, received on trial as a traveling minister. A journey of twenty-five miles brought me to my new residence in the town of Windham, in Greene county, a few miles west of the summit of the Catskill Mountains. Here, too, as well as in Harpersfield and Jefferson, I found some of the descendants of David Brainerd's relatives, who were striving to serve the God whom he served; and one of them had recently gone to join the sainted spirit of the missionary in that world where there is neither sorrow nor sin.

Soon after my removal to Windham, I attended my first appointment in a place called East Kill, a few miles west of the celebrated "Mountain House," which is so often pointed out to travelers as they pass up the majestic Hudson. East Kill was a secluded neighborhood among lofty hills, covered with vast forests, where a little band* of Christians had for nine years been

* The whole number in the society was but twenty-three. Of these, seven were males and sixteen were females. There

praying for a revival. Three years before this they had built a small, but commodious house of worship; for though it was comparatively a new settlement, and several of the inhabitants were dwelling in log-houses, yet they were industrious, frugal, and felt willing to unite their efforts in erecting a building where they and their children might assemble to worship the Lord. Doubtless, while the sound of the ax and the saw was heard on that building, the prayers of God's people went up to heaven that souls might be converted in that house. One man from an adjacent neighborhood had been awakened there about eighteen months after it was built. With that exception, none, I believe, had found the Lord in that house for three years after it was built; yet the people of God continued to call on Him for a shower of mercy.

At length a very sudden death occurred in the neighborhood. A young man was taken away after an illness of about forty hours. His friends believed that, during his short sickness, he obtained the witness of his acceptance with God. Just before his death he called his foster-father to his bed-side, took him by the hand, and insisted on a promise that he would strive to

was no other house of worship in the place but the one occupied by the Methodists.

serve the Lord. A few weeks after, while on my way to this appointment for the first time, I providentially fell in with a young man going to the same place. Weariness of body produced a depression of my feelings rather disinclining me to conversation; but I took up the cross, and exhorted the young man to seek the Lord. I was blessed in this duty, and felt encouraged to preach the gospel to sinners that afternoon. At the close of the sermon impenitent sinners, who had pious husbands or wives, were urged to repent; and the inquiry was addressed to professors, whose companions were not pious, whether they had done all they could do for the salvation of their unconverted friends. In the class-meeting, which immediately followed the sermon, a pious woman, with tears flowing from her eyes, expressed her deep desire for the salvation of her husband.

It was suggested to me that a protracted meeting would be desirable after the season of gathering the hay and harvest had passed. The proposal pleased me, but I did not think it best wholly to delay personal effort till that time. Accordingly, on the next morning, I went from house to house making inquiry concerning the *state of the souls* of the people. The serious, *candid answers* which I received, together with

some indications which I had seen on the day previous, led me to think that this people were ripe for a revival. It appeared to me that God, by his providences, and by his blessing upon the word preached by my predecessors, had been preparing the way for a harvest of souls in this place. With these views, I felt unwilling to delay my next visit to them till my regular appointment in four weeks from that time; therefore we decided to have a prayer-meeting at a private house on the next Friday evening. In the course of that prayer-meeting I thought there might be some one present who was under awakenings. The opportunity was given for the manifestation of this, and five or six arose almost immediately. This encouraged me to engage to come there on the following Sabbath evening, after preaching two sermons at a considerable distance from the place. On that occasion about fifteen persons came forward to ask the prayers of God's people. One of them was the husband of the woman who had expressed such strong desires for his salvation on the preceding Sabbath. She had urged him to go to the house of prayer that evening; and, as he left home to go there, she said, "I hope you will begin to pray to-night." She remained at home, praying, with agonizing desire, for his soul's welfare. He returned with

a sorrowful heart, and next morning went to the grove again and again, begging for mercy, till nearly noon, when Jesus met him in compassion, and imparted peace to his soul. Now the praying woman could rejoice in the mercy of God to her companion; but her father and three brothers were still out of the ark of safety, and exposed to the destruction which awaits the wicked. She and her pious mother interceded with God for them. In the course of one week her three brothers set out to serve God, and anxiously besought their aged father to give his heart to Him. The same evening on which this request was urged upon him he was powerfully affected by the Spirit of God, so that the feelings of his mind overpowered his bodily strength; but Jesus blessed his soul. His own house, where this scene transpired, was a Bethel indeed to him and his family, as none but they, I believe, were present that evening. My colleague spent some days in the vicinity, visiting from house to house, and going into the hay-fields and through the woods to find men who were employed in their temporal labor, and converse with them about their souls' salvation. The business of the season was very urgent; yet, whenever a prayer-meeting was appointed, it was well attended.

Just at the beginning of the work, the sudden

death, by drowning, of a young man who had formerly worked in the neighborhood, was made an occasion of solemn admonition to the youth, which appeared to have a good effect. The good woman whose desires and prayers for her husband's conversion have already been mentioned, was soon permitted to praise God for the conversion of a brother-in-law, a sister, and a sister-in-law, in addition to those relatives that have already been named. The man who had promised his dying adopted son, before the revival commenced, that he would try to lead a new life, and who had been under awakening from that time, found peace in believing. One young woman cried aloud for mercy in family prayer, and continued weeping till reminded that temporal duty imperiously called her away. She went, sighing and sobbing, on the way to the school which she was teaching, and was constrained by her feelings to dismiss her school; but found the Saviour's love in the course of the day. The joyful exclamations from the lips of young converts, proclaiming that they had found the Lord, caused the hearts of the saints to be glad.

A little boy, when converted, went to a neighbor, whom he had treated with disrespect, and *asked his forgiveness*. The young man with

whom I had conversed on the road when first going to East Kill, was one of the happy subjects of the work. Several pious women rejoiced over the conversion of their companions. The house of worship was the spiritual birth-place of many souls. The personal visits and conversation of Christians and young converts were the means of much good to their unconverted relatives and neighbors.

I well remember leaving my horse at the house of a friend one day, and walking through a part of the neighborhood, pointing sinners to Christ. I came at length to the house of a man whose sons were at work in the field about a mile distant. I went on through the woods, and found them busy with their hay. Taking a rake in my hand, I spent a little time in the field working with them, intermingling religious conversation as I had opportunity. When night came I returned with them to the house, encouraging them to seek the Lord. About a week afterward I visited the place, and saw three of those young men joyfully engaged in the service of God.

In the course of three weeks from the commencement of this work, about twenty-six thought they found peace in believing; and before the *revival* wholly subsided, the number was increased to *fifty*, including a few who resided in adjacent

neighborhoods. The awakening and conversion of those who came from other places to attend the meetings in this revival, appeared to be the means of spreading the flame. The number who united with us on probation in the East Kill society before the close of the conference year was forty-eight, being more than twice the whole number of members which we found there when the year commenced.

Soon after the revival of religion which I have just described, a quarterly meeting was held by brother N. White, our presiding elder, in the Methodist church in the western part of the town of Hunter. This was a few miles from East Kill, where God had lately accomplished a gracious work, and both places were included in the Windham circuit. Several of the young converts from East Kill came to our quarterly meeting. The altar was surrounded by candidates for the ordinance of baptism, among whom were the aged convert just brought into the fold of Christ, and several of his children and grand-children, who had also lately found peace in believing. This meeting was a very good one, and no doubt prepared the way for the revival which began a few weeks afterward in that place.

In the mean time I was permitted to attend *two good camp-meetings* in our district. One of

them was held in Jefferson, and commenced Sept. 5, 1836; and the other was held during the following week in Greenville, in the Coeyman's* circuit. At the latter I met with some of the relatives and connections of Hezekiah Calvin Wooster,† a holy man of God, whose labors in Canada had been very successful. Both of these camp-meetings were honored with the conversion of several souls. At the close of each of them our presiding elder, with tears of paternal affection, addressed the ministers present in a most pathetic manner. Those addresses made a powerful, and, I hope, lasting and beneficial impression upon my mind.

The minutes of the last conferences had shown us, that notwithstanding some of us had seen

° Pronounced *Queemans*.

† For some interesting particulars concerning this remarkable servant of the Most High, the reader is referred to Dr. Bangs' History of the Methodist Episcopal Church, vol. ii, pp. 72, 83. Also to a very "Brief Memoir of H. C. Wooster," written by myself, published at the Methodist Book-Room, and for sale with the Sunday-School publications. While residing in Windham I obtained access to his papers, and to several letters written to him by his fellow-laborers, among whom were Michael Coate and Shadrach Bostwick. This led me to write a short account of his useful labors and triumphant death. The above-mentioned camp-meeting was held not far distant from the grave-yard where the remains of Wooster lie, (I think without a stone to mark the spot,) awaiting the sound of the last trumpet.

very considerable accessions to our Church, yet, in the aggregate, the Methodist Episcopal Church had suffered a decrease, during the preceding year, of eighteen hundred and fifty-seven members. Of this decrease our own conference shared more than its proportion, the number lost amounting to four hundred and twenty-eight. Some serious searchings of heart were produced by these facts, accompanied by earnest resolutions to be more diligent, together with fervent prayers for Divine help.*

On the 20th of September (not having the fear of equinoctial storms before our eyes) we commenced a protracted meeting in West Hunter. As usual, the congregation was small at first; but the brethren were exhorted to "trust in the Lord and do good," and they appeared ardently desirous that God would make them holy, and bring their unconverted neighbors to the enjoyment of true religion. Among these praying brethren were two local preachers, residing in the place, whose names were Charles Chase and Justus Artman. The former lived near the church,

* I will just mention here that the returns of the next year showed a net *increase* of one thousand eight hundred and fifty-four in the New-York Conference alone, and the net increase in the whole connection was ten thousand one hundred and three! Our God answers the prayer of *persevering faith*.

in a comfortable habitation, where, with his kind and pious family, he welcomed the servants of the Lord to his hospitality. But he has gone from earth, and I hope now rests with his spiritual father, the Rev. John Bangs, and some of his own family, in the mansions of bliss.

Some of the Christians, who attended the meeting with flowing tears, told us of their deep anxiety that God would revive his work. The congregation increased daily; and several ministers, whom we had invited, came to labor with brother Horton and myself for a few days. At one time I believe there were ten ministers sitting together at brother Chase's table. Among these, I remember, were R. H. Bloomer, (my former colleague,) William F. Collins, Elijah Crawford, John Crawford, (now of the Oneida Conference,) William C. Hoyt, John B. Merwin, and O. W. Munger. The labors of all these brethren were useful to the people. Two other brethren were also present, who gave additional interest to the meetings by narrating publicly some of the circumstances of their awakening, conversion, and religious experience. One of these ministers was David Webster, who was then preaching Jesus to the congregations included in Saugerties circuit. It was very affecting to hear him relate his experience. As near as I can remember, it was as

follows:—About the year 1828, not very long after his marriage, he was invited by a friend to go with him to a prayer-meeting in a private house. He was a disbeliever in the doctrine of experimental religion, as taught by evangelical Christians, and also in the doctrine of eternal punishment. In the course of the meeting, an old man arose and testified to the knowledge of his acceptance with God. At first his unbelief spurned the idea of receiving this testimony as true. But the good Spirit wrought upon his heart; and although, for a time, he concealed his tears, yet at length he manifested his desires for the prayers of the people of God. He did not find the Lord at that time, but went home, and taking his wife by the hand, invited her to set out to serve God. That evening he commenced praying in his family; and on the following evening, while engaged in that solemn duty, the Lord set his soul at liberty. Almost the first thought which arose in his mind was concerning the dangerous condition of his unconverted parents. They had been kind to him; they had watched by his couch, in time of sickness, during the lonely midnight hour; but yet he feared that they were neglecting the great salvation, and of course in the way to everlasting death. *How unspeakably painful such a thought!*

As he could not then conveniently visit them, he immediately wrote a letter to them, informing "them what great things God had done for" him. In a few weeks he received a visit from them. While they tarried with him a few days, he urged them to submit themselves to the Lord. When they were about to depart, he took each of them by the hand, and did not let go his affectionate grasp till they had promised to seek the Lord until they found him. In a short time he received the happy tidings of their conversion to God. Many hearts were melted while the good man related these particulars. A few weeks before this present writing I saw a notice of brother Webster's peaceful death in the Christian Advocate. He was, for many years, a faithful laborer among the ministers of the New-York Conference.

Another brother was also prevailed upon, by my request, to give us a detail of some remarkable incidents in his life. This was a preacher whom I have frequently mentioned already, brother Hedstrom, from Charlotte circuit. In compliance with my wishes, he had given this narrative publicly in different places in the Jefferson circuit during the previous conference year, while *I had charge of that part of the work.* In every *instance* the people were much pleased and pro-

fited ; hence I renewed my request when he visited us at West Hunter.

It was very interesting to listen to his description of the moral darkness which surrounded him in Sweden, the land of his birth ; of the providential care which was over him on his way to the United States ; and of his feelings after his arrival here, as he contrasted the civil and religious liberty of this happy land with what he had seen in the old world. But when he spoke of his conviction for sin, and his first draught from the well of salvation ;—when he told us of his visit to his native land, and his interview with an aged father, after an absence of many years, and the effect which his testimony for God had, through the divine blessing, upon his father and other friends, the hearts of almost all who heard him seemed to be deeply affected. Many very touching circumstances were connected with this narrative, to which I have not time and space even to make an allusion. The relation which he gave us occupied the time which otherwise would have been given to a sermon, and appeared to me to have a most excellent effect.

As the meeting progressed, cases of awakening occurred. Among these was a merchant, about forty years old, who lived in an adjoining town. *His* eldest child, an amiable daughter,

and her brother, had been awakened at East Kill, in the reformation in that place which I have recorded. On a Sabbath evening during that good work, they were both with the mourners at the altar. I met them as they were returning home in their carriage on the next day, and "advised them how to flee from the wrath to come, which they saw continually hanging over their heads." The daughter's desire for her own salvation did not prevent her from thinking of the danger of her unconverted father; and she earnestly requested my wife and myself to visit their dwelling, that we might converse with him. Before the protracted meeting at West Hunter she had found the Saviour; and I had not only complied with her request, but had obtained the privilege of preaching in the neighborhood. Perhaps it was on the second or third day of the meeting in West Hunter that the merchant's stubborn knees were bent in humble supplication for pardoning mercy. Soon he professed to find the blessing which he sought, and his pious companion and daughter beheld with gladness the manifestation of God's grace in answer to their prayers.*

* The place where this man resided was very destitute of Methodist influence till this revival. A class, however, was soon formed; they were supplied with regular preaching;

An inquiry may arise in the reader's mind, how so many ministers could be employed to advantage in a country place, where the population was not dense, and the congregation not large. But he will remember that we had two or three sermons each day; and as there were some persons in the neighborhood who could not, and others who would not, come to the church, I requested two of the ministers to go from house to house, conversing with the people on the great concerns of their souls' salvation, while we were spending the afternoon in preaching, exhortation, and prayer in the church. Besides, on one or more evenings we had preaching at a place three or four miles from the church, as well as in that house of worship.

Brother R. H. Bloomer, who went out there to preach, was requested to call, as he returned, upon an inn-keeper who lived on the road, and invite him to come to the church and hear the gospel. The minister, though a perfect stranger to the man, called on him and kindly presented

and I believe a house of worship has since been built by the Methodists in that place. The pious daughter finished her pilgrimage in a few years. May the unworthy worm whom she acknowledged as her spiritual father meet her on the heights of Mount Zion! If I am not mistaken, the father *has since been called away to follow his daughter to the land of rest.*

the request. It was also kindly received, and on the next day the inn-keeper and his wife were seen in the house of prayer. This was the same day on which the merchant above mentioned, from an adjacent town, came to the altar and found mercy. He and the inn-keeper were intimate friends, and not far from the same age. The latter looked with surprise upon his kneeling friend, and listened attentively to the word of life. Before the week ended, he and his wife adopted the resolution of the Psalmist :—" I will declare mine iniquity, I will be sorry for my sin." On Sabbath we were favored with the labors of brothers Merwin and Collins. The feelings of the congregation during the afternoon sermon were very intense ; and as soon as the opportunity was given, a large number pressed their way to the altar of prayer. The inn-keeper came again as a suppliant for mercy. In the course of the prayer-meeting he said to me, " Mr. Osborn, I have been praying God to let me know what is the hindrance that prevents me from giving up my heart to Him, and I believe He has answered my prayer. I think I ought to *clear out my bar*." Right glad was I to learn that he saw the evil of selling ardent spirits. " You need *not wait*," said I, " till you reach home and *actually remove* the decanters from your bar. God.

is ready to take the will for the deed. Make the sacrifice sincerely and fully in your heart, and you may now rely implicitly upon the merits of Christ, and find mercy." He told me on the next morning that he had "*cleared out his bar*," and his soul was happy in God.

A brother of the merchant was also one of the seekers for mercy on that memorable Sabbath. His daughters also embraced religion about the same time. It was thought that about twenty persons, if not more, found the blessing of forgiveness during the meeting, which continued six days.

The inn-keeper's house became a place of occasional preaching, where my soul has been refreshed with showers of mercy. There I have seen the man of the house, the converted merchant, and his brother, all happy in the love of God together. Not long after the inn-keeper's conversion, a gentleman, who has since represented that district in Congress with great ability, called at his house. Before this gentleman went away, the young Christian said to him, "Colonel P., something strange has happened here lately." "What is it?" said the colonel. "God has converted my soul, and I have stopped selling rum."

Shortly after this blessed season of mercy, a *good work* began in brother Hedstrom's circuit,

at the same place where, three years before, we enjoyed such a good protracted meeting in a barn. The weather was cold and unpleasant while I was with them, during the first part of the meeting, which commenced September 27th, 1836 ; hence the congregation was small for some days. But the God of Elijah answered by fire, and it was thought that twenty-five or thirty souls were brought home to Christ. The Rev. Messrs. J. Bangs, J. Crawford, and A. C. Field assisted brother Hedstrom in this revival.

On the 26th of October, 1836, I left my home in Windham, and crossed over the Catskill Mountains, in compliance with the request of brothers D. J. Wright and W. C. Hoyt, to unite my efforts with theirs in winning souls to Christ. Any one who has passed over the mountain on the Catskill and Windham turnpike must remember the grand and glorious prospect which spreads out before the eye of the traveler when he stands on the lofty summit. The section of country inhabited by the congregation worshipping in the Methodist church in Durham was a part (though but a small part) of this magnificent landscape. As my eye wandered over this part of the beautiful prospect, it was natural for me to think of the *souls, the immortal souls*, scattered among those *hills and valleys*, for whose welfare I was going

to labor for a few days. The reader will not wonder that I should lift up my heart in prayer to God that he would bless my feeble labors, and the efforts of my brethren in the ministry, who were coming there to labor for God. If I mistake not, I met during that week with the following preachers, besides the ministers stationed on the circuit; namely, Bela Smith, Phineas Cook,* M. L. Pendell, John Crawford, L. Craw, D. Webster, Daniel Holmes, and Elijah Crawford. The last three in this list have now escaped to "Immanuel's breast."

On the first day of the meeting I endeavored to show the members of the church what was their duty on the present occasion, using these words as a motto:—"Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" The invitation was given daily for awakened sinners to come to the altar; but again and again we were grieved to see none accept the invitation. On Saturday afternoon brother Crawford (now of the Oneida Conference) preached an impressive sermon from these words:—"Have faith in God." He was about to leave us, and return to his own circuit; but his soul

* These two were aged brethren, on the supernumerary or superannuated list, who resided in Durham. E. Crawford died in Hartford, Aug. 30, 1849. A few moments before his death, he whispered to a friend, "I am filled unutterably full of glory and of God."

yearned for the sinners in Durham, and he most earnestly exhorted the brethren in the place to "have faith in God," and trust in him to send his awakening grace to the hearts of the people. In the evening of that day we saw the mighty power of God displayed. Fifteen or twenty weeping penitents came to the altar. On the following day, both in the afternoon and evening, the altar was surrounded by those whose anxious inquiry was, "What shall we do to be saved?" and twelve happy converts crowned the labors of Saturday evening, Sabbath, and Sabbath evening. I left the place on the next day; but soon heard that thirteen persons at one time united with the society as probationers for membership.

During the year of my labors on the Windham circuit, I was repeatedly favored with the assistance of my beloved brethren Collins and Bloomer, who were then laboring in the Prattsville circuit. They were blessed with revivals in different parts of their circuit; and at three of their protracted meetings I was permitted, to some extent, to participate in their labors and their joys. One of these meetings was at a place called Beaver Dam, in Roxbury, in Delaware county. Here the Lord blessed my own soul in *a remarkable degree*. Another was at Morea-

ville, in the same county, and began December 20th, 1836. Here I had an opportunity of laboring with two dear friends, whose acquaintance I had made some years before in Columbia county. I allude to Rev. D. Starks and Rev. John Carver. The latter was one of the many who have cause to thank God for raising up Arnold Scholefield to preach the gospel, and for making him the instrument of their conversion to God. It was at the Downing meeting-house, in Hillsdale, in Columbia county, N. Y., where the solemn words fell from his lips which reached the heart of John Carver. This was before I had visited Hillsdale, and probably when Mr. Scholefield was presiding elder of the Rhinebeck district. While traveling the Windham circuit, a newspaper notice of the death of Mr. S. met my eye. I had taken the Advocate from the post-office while on my way to an appointment, and, perusing its columns as I rode along, these words caught my notice as the caption of an article:—"Death of Rev. Mr. Scholefield." For some time I could hardly command my feelings so as to read the particulars of his death. At length, having perused the affecting account, I went on my way indulging in reflections both solemn and joyful. I could not but remember the expressions contained in *a letter written when he was a superannuated*

preacher, and I was laboring on the Delaware circuit. He alluded, in that letter, to former days, when *he* had gone over those hilly regions in search of lost souls ; and then he added, "If strength permitted, how gladly would I again take the roughest circuit I ever traveled, and point sinners to the Lamb of God." Although his death was so sudden that he had no opportunity to leave a dying testimony for his Master, yet his life of piety and usefulness did not permit us to doubt of his admission, through the merits of Christ, into the kingdom of God.

But let me return from this digression, into which I have been led by mentioning the name of brother Carver as one who was present at the meeting held in Moresville. At this meeting, as well as the one in Roxbury, mentioned before, several souls appeared to obtain an interest in the Saviour. I shall not soon forget the feelings of my heart while riding and conversing with brother Collins on my departure from Moresville. Both of us remained on Saturday evening till the close of the service ; but as he had an appointment at ten o'clock next morning, about eight miles from Moresville, and my appointment, at the same hour, was about fourteen miles distant, *we traveled on horseback several miles that evening, and, rising early in the morning, went on*

together till our different appointments called us to part. We had rejoiced to see the goodness of God at the meeting from whence we had just come, and we considered it a privilege to

"Spend our strength, and blood, and pains,
To cultivate Immanuel's lands."

But another meeting in brother Collins' field of labor, at a place called West Settlement, was more successful, probably, than either of the two just mentioned. Brother Collins preached a fast-day sermon there on the Friday before their quarterly meeting. On Saturday and Sabbath the quarterly meeting was held; and on Monday afternoon, when I arrived at the church, I found brother White, the presiding elder, preaching with much earnestness to the people. The meeting was continued each day and evening through that week. I could tarry with them but a few days; but I find, from a memorandum of mine, dated two weeks after the quarterly meeting, that I had then been informed that about thirty-five individuals had found the Saviour of sinners.

In the course of the winter a good quarterly meeting was held in our church in East Kill, where the Lord had poured out his Spirit abundantly during the previous summer. More than eighty friends from a distance were kindly provided with entertainment on Saturday night. A

snow-storm, which commenced on Saturday, became so severe that none of the friends from other places could reach their homes till Monday. On that day I took my wife and infant child, and, in company with eight other sleighs, (one of them occupied by Rev. N. White, the presiding elder,) started to go down the mountain to my residence, about six miles distant. The neighbors shoveled a path through the snow for us, but our progress was so slow that we were five hours in reaching our home. While the friends, with our assistance, were breaking a path for us, the females would stop at some house on the road. But amidst these little difficulties we felt contented, yea, thankful; for we were returning from a spiritual "feast of fat things."

While I resided in Windham, my dear brother Munger was laboring on the Broome circuit, adjoining Windham. His colleague was a native of Ireland, by the name of John Crawford, who is now a minister in the Oneida Conference. They commenced a protracted meeting November 7th at Strykersville, and were assisted by J. Bangs, O. G. Hedstrom, and A. C. Field. I also esteemed it a privilege to lend my feeble aid during the few days which I could spend with *them*. A number of conversions took place before I left. After the first week, they had but

little help from abroad ; yet I believe they continued the meetings every evening (and perhaps almost every day) till the quarterly meeting, held there on the 26th and 27th instant. On that occasion I was informed that twenty-two of the young converts were baptized in the name of the Holy Trinity, and God's presence was manifested in the midst, a number of souls being converted at the quarterly meeting.

I believe that more than sixty were brought to Christ in this revival, and almost all of them placed themselves under the care of the church. When I remember the tears that were shed by the ministers of that circuit as they spoke to each other concerning their protracted meeting a few days before its commencement, I am reminded of the words of holy writ :—"They that sow in tears shall reap in joy."

Another protracted meeting was appointed by the preachers of Broome circuit at a small church in a neighborhood which I think they called Blenheim Hill ; but I believe it was frequently designated, on account of its high elevation and rocky surface, as the "*Back Bone*." The weather was intensely cold when this meeting was held, and I rode twenty-five miles on horseback from my house to reach the place. When I entered the church I found A. C. Field, a young

preacher from another circuit, was preaching, but neither of the preachers of the circuit was there. This looked rather forbidding. However, in the course of the day both of them arrived, having traveled many miles through the severe cold. I believe they had been detained by some business of church discipline. But the hallowed fire soon began to kindle among the people. After spending three or four days with them, I returned to my own circuit. Not long after, a letter from brother Munger informed me that several had been added to the society as the fruit of the meeting; and that one man in particular, for whose awakening and conversion I had felt a special desire, was made happy in the love of God two or three weeks after the close of the meeting. Two different neighborhoods in the town of Windham were favored with some manifestations of divine power during the year of my residence there. One of these places was then called Osbornville, as several persons of the name of Osborn dwelt in that vicinity. Having no church of our own in the place, we labored under many disadvantages; yet several turned to the Lord.

We had a protracted meeting in that part of Windham called the *North Settlement*, and about fifteen persons were made happy subjects of the

grace of God in the space of two weeks. The society in this place had been formed by Seth Crowell in 1805, when he preached on the Albany circuit. There were a few aged brethren living there who remembered him with strong affection. With delight they would describe the earnest manner in which that man of God once blew the gospel trumpet among those hills and forests, causing them to echo with salvation's "joyful sound." If the reader turns to the sixteenth and thirty-second pages of Part I. of my narrative, he will not wonder that I listened with interest to anecdotes concerning Mr. Crowell.*

At the conference of 1836, when brother Horton and myself were appointed to Windham circuit, a part of the circuit was connected with a section of Middletown circuit, to form Prattsville circuit. On Windham circuit, as we found it, there were two hundred and forty-nine members, and we left three hundred and fifty-five, there being a net addition of one hundred and six. The whole number received on probation during the year was one hundred and twenty-four. Of these, fifty-two were received into full connection

* Mr. C. died in the city of New-York, July 6th, 1826. See a brief account of him in "Minutes of Conferences," vol. i, p. 541. The volumes of bound Minutes are an invaluable treasure to every one who delights to trace the footsteps of the heralds of the cross.

before the close of the conference year. I will here add, that Rev. Messrs. P. Cook, D. J. Wright, and L. Craw rendered us very acceptable assistance in Windham at our protracted meeting, as well as other ministers whom I have already named. May the good Lord abundantly reward all his servants, both in the ministry and membership, who have at any time or place assisted me in my efforts to pluck sinners as brands from the everlasting burnings!

CHAPTER VI.

COEYMANS CIRCUIT.

IN the spring of 1837, as I retained the same views of duty which I had when I left Jefferson circuit, the authorities of the Church indulged me in what they considered perhaps a whim, and I was appointed to a new field of labor. Rev. F. W. Sizer was appointed my colleague for this year, he having been one of the preachers there during the year previous. This section of country lay on the west side of the Hudson River, and it was inhabited by a more wealthy population than some other circuits in which I had labored. The villages of Coxsackie, New-Baltimore, and Coeymans (all lying on the Hudson) were included in it. The northern extremity of the circuit was but about seven miles from Albany, and the southern part of it about the same distance from Catskill, in Greene county, and the circuit was perhaps nearly equally divided between Greene and Albany counties. To the west and north lay portions of the Troy Conference, and on the east side of the river were Columbia and Rensselaer counties. Many of the hills over *which I had wandered in search of precious souls,*

when I labored in Chatham and Hillsdale circuits, in 1829, 1830, 1831, and 1832, were plainly to be seen from several heights of land in Coeymans circuit. On my journey from Windham to Coeymans, I passed again with my family over the summit of the Catskill Mountains, where I could look down upon my new circuit as upon a map. The Lord knows what were my feelings while casting my eyes over the field assigned me for that year. How cheering to the minister, under such circumstances, to remember the promise of the Almighty Jesus:—"Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the world." As I was descending the mountain, and urging my way on toward my future habitation, the clouds began to pour down torrents of rain upon us, and when we entered it, our furniture and ourselves were well drenched; but God mercifully preserved our health and lives.

About three miles, I believe, from the brick church (then recently erected near Coeymans Landing) stood the old stone church in which Bishop Asbury held a conference in the year 1807. In the year previous to my coming here, three preachers were appointed to this circuit, but only two for the present year; hence we *found it necessary to enlist local preachers, to assist us in supplying the regular Sabbath ap-*

pointments. A local elder by the name of Hugh Jolly, who, with his brother, resided near the old *stone church* just mentioned, was very willing to labor with us as far as advanced age would permit. His labors were very acceptable and useful, as were those of brother Craw, who lived in an adjoining circuit.

In the course of the summer I attended two camp-meetings on the opposite side of the river. One of them was held at Ancram, under the supervision of Rev. B. Griffin. Among others who preached there was our (now deceased) father Samuel Cochran, who had told me, fifteen years previous, to *do the devil's kingdom all the injury I could*. The numerous anecdotes which the preacher told in that sermon extorted a few smiles and many tears. The parting scene at that camp-meeting was such a melting season as I have but seldom witnessed. The other camp-meeting to which I alluded was in Chatham, within the bounds of the Troy district, of which Rev. Buell Goodsell was presiding elder. Here I met many of the friends of former years, whose steadfastness in piety cheered me much. It was here that I last heard the Rev. Charles Sherman preach the gospel. Never can I forget the richness of divine truths, as well as the holy pathos of *that sermon*.

We appointed an extra meeting at the Union church, near Dr. Webber's, in the south-west part of Coxsackie, to commence on Tuesday, September 26th, 1837. On my way to this place, which was several miles from my house, I was drawn out in prayer to Almighty God for his aid in the labors before me, and for the blessing of God to rest upon this first extra effort which we made after my appointment to this circuit. A lonely grove near the side of the road presented such a favorable opportunity for secret prayer, that I dismounted from my horse with feelings perhaps somewhat similar to those of Abraham's servant when he cried out, "O Lord God of my master Abraham, I pray thee send me good speed this day."


Two or three ministers whom we expected to be with us were providentially detained from coming; but we remembered that God gave victory to Gideon's army when it was reduced from thirty-two thousand to three hundred. We labored from Tuesday till Saturday before we saw any marked indications of willingness in sinners to seek the Lord. When at length some broke the snare of the enemy by coming to the altar, others were encouraged to yield to their convictions of duty and do likewise.

The conversion of one man, in the course of

the second week of the meeting, was attended with some rather peculiar circumstances, which I will relate as nearly as I can recollect them. His wife was among the first who went forward as a seeker of religion. More than once I went to him in the congregation, and besought him to yield to the claims of duty. He listened with attention, and his respectful replies indicated that he felt the need of religion; yet he declined to "go forth without the camp bearing" Christ's "reproach." Just about this time, a little child of one of his relatives was accidentally burned to death. I was called to attend the funeral, and, after the solemn service, went by invitation to dine at the house of my friend whose wife was seeking the Lord. My conversation was directed to the object of leading this interesting couple to Christ. After dinner, I very unexpectedly received a small sum of money from him as a present. Taking occasion from this circumstance, I set before him the willingness of God to bless him and his wife by saying to him, "God is more willing to impart the pearl of great price to you, than you were to bestow this present upon me." I then left him, and went to make other calls among the people. In the evening, when the invitation was again given, I went to him once *more in the congregation*, and asked him if he was

now willing to go with me to the altar. "Yes!" said he, "I will go with you." The readiness with which he answered and went forward surprised me so much, that I almost feared that he had become impatient of my entreaties, and that he was going rather out of disrespect than from a better motive. This fear, however, was happily removed by his rising up soon after and telling us that, in the course of that afternoon, the blessed Jesus had set his soul at liberty. He gave me to understand that, very soon after I left the house, he and his wife kneeled down together by their own fireside, and while calling upon the Lord, his soul was blessed with pardoning love. Now he esteemed it a privilege to own his blessed Master.

I do not definitely recollect the number who professed to find the Saviour of sinners at this meeting, but it is my impression that there were fifteen or twenty. I distinctly recollect the grateful feelings of my heart when, on my journey homeward, I came to the grove where I had poured out my soul in prayer to God for the success of the meeting. Dismounting from my horse, I found a place where I could kneel down beneath the shadow of the forest-trees, and here *I offered up praise and thanksgiving to the God of grace for the tokens of mercy which had ap-*



peared on Coeymans circuit. I was also much encouraged to look for the revival of God's work in other parts of the circuit.

The Methodist church in Coeymans Hollow, sometimes called Aquatoc, was nearly in the centre of the circuit, and not far from this church was my residence. In this neighborhood resided our aged friend, brother Blodget, who is mentioned in Bishop Asbury's journal as one at whose house he once called and found entertainment. At the camp-meeting in Greenville, which I attended in the year previous to this, I had met with some Christians from this place, among whom was H. D. Brown, a class-leader. By him I was introduced to some unconverted neighbors of his, for whom he felt a deep anxiety, and to these I gave such advice as I hoped would prove beneficial. When I removed to this place I was pleased to learn that God had converted some of these individuals at a protracted meeting, held some time after the camp-meeting. Perhaps fifteen or twenty persons had been blessed in that revival; yet there were many of our neighbors who were living without God in the world. With a strong desire for their conversion, I appointed an extra meeting, to commence October 10th, 1837, which was two weeks *from the commencement of the meeting at the*

Union church, just mentioned. It is possible that I did not consult with the lay brethren as much as prudence required concerning the time of the meeting; for I learned subsequently that one of our most efficient lay brethren thought then that I had selected an unfavorable time. Yet this did not hinder him from laboring with us for the good of souls. A preparatory meeting was appointed on an evening not long before our extra meeting was to commence. There the brethren and sisters were addressed on their duties, and an effort was made to impress a sense of their responsibility upon them.

Three sermons were preached on the first day, and two on the second, before any other minister came to my help. Perhaps I never felt deeper anxiety for souls than I did during those two days. At the close of the afternoon service my heart was delighted to see my dear brother D. Starks arrive. No invitation was given to sinners to manifest a concern about their souls, by coming to the altar or mourners' seat, till one came to my house and asked my intercessions in her behalf. Before that time, however, such professors of religion as felt the need of purity of heart had been invited to gather around the altar, and "with one accord, in one place," plead for the baptism of the Holy Ghost and of fire.

A brother present asked if awakened sinners might not come also. An affirmative answer was given; but still the idea was kept prominent that we were then endeavoring to lead the *Church* forward to that position where she could labor successfully for her blessed Master. Before the first week ended we had gracious manifestations of divine mercy, and the Sabbath following was a memorable day. The cries of awakened sinners, and the prayers of those who were interceding for them, were mingled with the praises of young converts and the shouts of happy Christians, who rejoiced in the triumphs of the blessed Redeemer.

Our beloved brother Starks was obliged to leave us on the Tuesday following; but still the work went on, and many were added to the Lord. The labors of our brethren in the laity, who resided in the place, and of others who came from adjacent societies, were very useful. This revival brought in persons of different ages, classes, and conditions. Some, whose moral habits and circumstances in life gave them influence in society, were brought to bow low at the foot of the cross. Others, who had served sin and Satan with a high hand, turned from their vicious courses to the living God.

As I had promised to go to New-Lebanon on

the succeeding week to labor with brother Starks,* and as my appointment on another part of the circuit called me away on Sabbath afternoon, I improved the opportunity in the morning to gather in the fruits of the meeting by giving them permission to join our church on probation. I believe there were two or three cases which were looked upon as quite doubtful, and these persons were advised not to offer themselves just then as probationers, and they followed the advice. The number of professed converts who united with us when the first opportunity was given (only twelve days from the beginning of the meeting) was forty-nine, and these were but a part of those who had already found mercy. My colleague, brother Sizer, with the assistance of brother Jolly, continued the meeting through the ensuing week. The whole number of those who professed to obtain the forgiving love of God in this revival was about eighty-five or ninety persons.

The Sabbath evening after I left Coeymans Hollow I spent at the Union church, where, as I have already said, several had recently been

* This was the condition on which brother Starks had agreed to assist me, and I did not feel at liberty to disappoint him, though I strongly desired to remain at Coeymans Hollow a season longer.

brought to Christ. Here I endeavored to feed the lambs of the flock with the sincere milk of the word. On the next day I crossed the Hudson River, and went on my way to New-Lebanon, where I was received very kindly by brother Starks and his colleague, W. M. Chipp. As this was the place where I had resided and labored eight years before, and where I had met with much kindness when my family were driven from their abode by fire,* I felt it a peculiar privilege to labor with them on this occasion. The servants of God did not spend their strength for naught.

On the succeeding week I returned from New-Lebanon to my home, and in a few days our quarterly meeting commenced at the Methodist church in Bethlehem, about eight miles from Albany. Our presiding elder, brother N. White, was with us from Saturday morning till Monday afternoon. The meetings on Saturday and Sabbath were profitable. On Sabbath evening no invitation was given for awakened sinners to come to the altar; but professors, who desired full salvation, were invited to manifest it by coming around the altar. We had a very melting season in calling upon the name of the Lord; and one old brother, of high standing and extensive

* See page 150 of Part I. of this narrative.

influence in the church, said, after the meeting closed, "Brother Osborn, God has renewed the witness of perfect love in my heart."

Rev. Joshua Poor, then residing in Greenbush, opposite to Albany, came to our assistance in the afternoon of the next day. We had made arrangements to follow our quarterly meeting with a protracted meeting, and had invited brother Poor to come and labor with us. His coming gave us much joy; but we exhorted the brethren to look beyond men and means, and to call upon God for help. Brother Poor addressed a few words of exhortation to us immediately after his arrival. He said that he knew not of a place on earth where he should be more glad to see a revival than in that place. As he had resided in that vicinity previous to his entering the traveling ministry, he probably felt, in some measure, as Paul did concerning the salvation of *his* countrymen.

In the evening we assembled again for worship; and, at the close of his sermon, brother Poor, according to a previous request from me, invited awakened sinners to manifest their desires. About *twenty* accepted this invitation, and most of them appeared to be deeply concerned for their souls' welfare. Several gave us *reason to believe* that they found the precious

pearl that evening. The people of God were much encouraged by such a good beginning of the work, and resolved to pray and labor more earnestly than ever. The good old man, whose own soul had been so much quickened on the previous evening, now saw that the same God who could sanctify his people could also awaken careless sinners, even though some of them had long neglected the house of God. Brother Poor was with us several days, and in the course of about two weeks nearly fifty professed to meet with a happy change, and not far from forty placed themselves under the care of the Methodist Church.

According to previous arrangements, a protracted meeting was commenced by brother Poor in Castleton, Rensselaer county, N. Y., immediately after the close of ours at Bethlehem. Castleton was an appointment in brother Poor's charge, and belonged to the Troy Conference. Leaving my horse in the care of a friend, I rode with brother Poor through Albany and Greenbush to Castleton. He remarked that, as there had been no awakening in Castleton in about seventeen years, he thought that the best way to arouse the church there would be to preach first directly to sinners. He feared, unless some *movement* could be produced among them, it

would be impracticable to awake the church to action. With these views I concurred, although we both believed that, *generally*, the best way is to preach at first more especially to the church. Brother John Alley, who had been my colleague six years before, was with us a short time at this meeting.

In the course of a few days, awakenings among sinners were plainly evident. This had a very beneficial influence upon professors of religion. One aged brother remarked to a minister, "I begin to think that we shall have a revival in Castleton; it looks like it." "Yes!" said the minister, "the prospect does appear favorable; but there was never more need of prayer in Castleton than there is now." A married lady, whose husband was absent from home, was among the first who came to Christ. Late in the evening of the same day her companion returned home. In the morning I called, in company with a lay brother, to see them. We found his wife rejoicing. She sent for him to come in, and he very soon complied with her request. Not knowing the state of his mind, and fearing that he might feel himself discommoded by being called in from his work, I made some apology. "O!" said he, "I would *leave any business whatever could I but obtain the comforts of religion.* When my wife told me

last night what God had done for her soul, I thought it was time for me to seek the Lord." Although he lived in a good house, had a very interesting family, with all the comforts of life around him, yet he saw and felt that there was yet *one thing needful*. The tears which started from his eyes during this conversation indicated the deep feeling of his heart. Nor was he ashamed to let the congregation know (when he met with them in the afternoon and evening) that he was determined to seek the Lord. Thanks be to God! he did not seek in vain. Next morning I had to leave at an early hour, in order to meet my Sabbath appointments on my own circuit, which were more than twenty miles distant. Our aged brother Hogeboom,* who resided in this place, told me just before I left the place that, on the previous evening, he believed that God had sanctified his soul. This news gladdened my heart, and encouraged me to believe that the good work would go on in Castleton.

Instead of returning by the circuitous route which I took in coming, I obtained conveyance

* This excellent man had been a member of the convention which formed a new constitution for the State, about the year 1821. He also had been a judge of the court, and he was a member of Congress about the years 1824 and '25. It was not long after the revival above-mentioned before Judge H. went home to his Father's house above.

in a small boat across the North River, and a walk of one or two miles brought me to the place where I had left my horse. The weather was cold and stormy, and the mud and snow made the traveling very unpleasant; but on horseback and in the boat, as well as when walking through the mire, I was cheered with the thoughts of what God had begun to do in Castleton. On my way to my Sabbath appointments I spent two or three hours at my own house, informed my wife of the prosperity of the work of God, and invited her to join me in praising God for his goodness to the children of men. I afterwards learned that the good work went on graciously in Castleton. A house of worship was soon erected. Although I have never been there since, yet I have looked upon that little village from the deck of the steamboat when I was passing, and remembered that revival with gratitude to Almighty God.

Just before the close of the year 1837, a little band assembled in Cocksackie, in Greene county, to commence a series of meetings in the name of the Lord Jesus, remembering that He had said to his disciples, "Without me ye can do nothing." It was in the edifice occupied by the *Reformed Dutch Church*, in the village near the *Cocksackie Landing*, that this series of meetings

was held. The Methodist brethren asked and obtained permission from the occupants of the house to hold a protracted meeting there, with the understanding that, at certain times, (I believe once on Sabbath and once on a week-evening,) the Reformed Dutch congregation could assemble there to hold their usual regular meetings. At the commencement, no other minister but myself was present; but before the services of the day were closed, my heart was cheered by the arrival of my beloved brother Rev. D. Starks, who came probably forty miles to spend a few days with us in his Master's work. Had the Hudson River been in a situation for him to cross directly over, his journey from his residence in New-Lebanon would have been much shorter; but he could not cross safely at that time without going by the way of Albany. Yet, according to his promise, he came cheerfully (though the weather was very cold) to labor with us for the good of souls. Brother J. D. Marshall, from Windham circuit, also came to our assistance, and was able to remain a short time with us.

If I rightly recollect, it was on the sixth evening of the meeting that the work of conversion commenced among the mourners. My colleague, brother Sizer, had arrived, and was laboring with *us*, and the people of God were earnest in their

supplications. Though we had no place as convenient as we could wish for mourners to kneel together for prayer and personal instruction, yet the good Lord inclined them to avail themselves of such privileges as we could give them. I think it was on Sabbath evening, December 31st, just as the year 1837 was expiring and the year 1838 was commencing, that Mrs. C. was enabled to enter into the enjoyment of justifying mercy through faith in Christ. During the space of four weeks in succession, there was not a single day, I believe, in which Christians failed to assemble in that house, both in the daytime and in the evening, to call upon the name of the Lord. In the mean time the people were not only warned "publicly," but "from house to house." In this good work the ministers were much assisted by three or four brethren * of the laity, some of whom came from other parts of the circuit, at my earnest request, to devote their time and strength to the work of leading sinners to Christ. The readiness with which they co-operated in this good work, the willingness with which they performed any part assigned them, and the fervor which they appeared to feel in doing their duty, have produced a grateful affection toward those brethren, which will endure

* L. Scott and T. W. Gibbons were among the number.

while life and memory last; yea, I trust, while "immortality endures." Two of those brethren were with me at an afternoon meeting, when circumstances compelled me to resort to a measure which, to them, appeared at the time very improper. I was certain that it must appear so to them till I could explain the circumstances. This I could not consistently do till after the close of the meeting; yet they did not suffer this unusual step of mine to hinder them from doing their duty even in that meeting. And afterwards, when the explanation was made, they were fully satisfied that a correct course had been taken.

An exhorter in the place, then a merchant, but now, and for several years past, a traveling preacher,* was very active in promoting the revival. If I mistake not, we had some assistance from local preachers; and among them was our aged father in Christ, Rev. H. Jolly. Perhaps I never saw a revival in which so much apparent awakening influence accompanied the singing of suitable hymns as on this occasion. Some of the brethren, who frequently led the singing, were remarkable for the solemn, joyful, pathetic earnestness of their singing; and the Spirit of God accompanied it with power to many hearts.

• ° *Rev. Jason Wells, of the New-York Conference*

It was our custom, at the close of the sermon on every evening, to inform the congregation that a prayer-meeting would then commence, and that all who chose to retire could have the opportunity while we were singing a few verses, and that all who wished to remain could do so. We generally added that we hoped that those who remained till the prayer-meeting commenced would continue till its close, as we did not intend to continue it long after nine o'clock. By this course we succeeded in avoiding the interruption which arises when persons leave at different times during the prayer-meeting. Although the congregation was generally quite large on every evening, yet, when the opportunity was given for any to retire before the prayer-meeting, almost all the congregation remained, and on some occasions none retired till the prayer-meeting was ended.

I think it was in the course of the second week of the meeting that Rev. J. B. Wakeley, from Stockport, on the opposite side of the Hudson River, came over to our "Macedonia" to help us. As brother Starks and brother Marshall had gone back to their own work at the close of the previous week, when brother Wakeley made *his* appearance it led brother Sizer and myself to "thank God and take courage." It was on

a subsequent visit to Cossackie, before the series of meetings closed, that he crossed the river amidst much difficulty and danger. The weather for a few days previous had been so mild that the ice had broken up, and was floating in detached pieces down the stream. Our brother ventured to attempt to pass over in a small boat, with but one man with him. The wind was high, the pieces of ice were thickly strewed over the surface of the water, dashing one against the other; but the servant of the Lord persevered, and his divine Master carried him safely through.*

° In the course of a few weeks I had an opportunity to return this kindness. Brother W. had an extra meeting in Claverack, and wrote for me to assist him. Crossing the river was then very difficult, and I could not get my horse over at all. A small boat conveyed me a part of the way on the water, and when we came to the ice the boatmen dragged the boat (provided with runners) on the ice. When I reached the shore I walked three miles through the mud to the place. When I returned, a few days after this, I walked some distance on the ice with the boatmen to reach the boat, and stepped from one cake to another, where the water was said by the boatmen to be sixty feet deep. But these perils were small compared with many that some of Christ's ministers have passed through. They were small, too, in comparison of dangers which are often encountered by many in pursuit of worldly gain. About twelve years after this I met with a pious woman, who gave me the pleasing information that God blessed the message which I delivered in weakness at Claverack on that occasion to the awakening and conversion of her soul. A rich reward for all my toil!

Brother W. had recently been on a visit to a dying minister on Long Island, Rev. Jesse Carley. This minister was brother W.'s immediate predecessor at Stockport. He had also labored with much acceptance and success, a very few years before, in the Coeymans circuit, which included Cocksackie. When our brother Wakeley came to visit us, he told us that he had been a journey of one hundred and forty miles, to carry a token of brotherly love to him from his friends in Stockport. They had heard of his protracted illness, and had sent him a small sum of money as an expression of their kindness. Soon after brother W. returned from Long Island, the tidings came that brother C. had gone home to his heavenly rest. The account which our brother gave of the triumphant language of the departing saint, was of course very interesting and impressive to the people of Cocksackie. The servant of God being dead, seemed yet to speak through the lips of another to those who had, in former days, listened to his sermons and witnessed his tears.

In the course of three weeks from the commencement of the meeting, about seventy persons professed to find peace in believing. Before the *revival* terminated, the number was increased *nearly*, if not quite, to a hundred. A goodly


number of them united with us on probation, although several of them, having connections and relatives in other churches, were led to cast in their lots with them. I will only add, that shortly after this a way seemed opened for the erection of a Methodist church in the village. In the course of three days, I succeeded in obtaining subscriptions to the amount of about thirteen hundred dollars. After I left the circuit, the house was erected and dedicated to the worship of God. I trust it has already been the birthplace of many souls; and many more, I hope, will there "taste, and see that the Lord is good."

Not long after the revival at Cocksackie I spent a few days in Greenbush, where brother Poor resided, and where he was holding a series of meetings. Four pious persons, whom I frequently saw during those few days, have since gone home to the mansions of bliss. One was the wife of our brother Poor; another was Enos Northrop, a prominent member of the church in that place; another was his daughter, then afflicted with lingering illness; and the other was Dr. Noah Levings, whose praise is in all the churches. The pleasing and instructive conversation of brother Levings and brother Poor, in *the study of the latter*, has left a lasting impres-

sion on my mind. How many, with whom I have held sweet converse on earth, are now conversing with wise and holy beings in the mansions of the blessed!

During this visit at Greenbush I embraced the opportunity, two or three times, of walking across the river on the ice to Albany, where I called on my old friend E. Ford, whose hospitalities I had enjoyed some years before in Columbia county. As the State Legislature was in session, I had the privilege of listening a few hours to the debates in the capitol; and I hope that this and the few other opportunities which I have enjoyed of witnessing the proceedings of our legislators, have had a tendency to induce me more frequently and earnestly to pray for "all that are in authority."

In the early part of February, 1838, brother Poor had an opportunity to return the visit which I had made him, by assisting us in our protracted meeting at Coeymans Landing. This was commenced by a good quarterly meeting in the new brick church which had been erected there. A revival, in which forty or fifty persons professed to be the subjects of the work, was the result of God's blessing on the efforts made at this time. *Brother Jolly*, the local preacher whom I have mentioned, remarked in the course of this meet-



ing that he had seen many gracious revivals during the last thirty years in that and the adjacent towns, but he had never beheld such displays of divine power and mercy before as he had witnessed within the last six months. There must have been about three hundred persons within the limits of that circuit who professed to find the Friend of sinners between June 1st, 1837, and June 1st, 1838; but we are often reminded of the parable of the net, from which they "gathered the good into vessels, but cast the bad away."

While brother Sizer, brother Jolly, and myself rejoiced in seeing sinners turn to God, our brethren in charges adjacent were, some of them, highly favored of the Lord. At Rensselaerville it was thought, if I remember rightly, that one hundred came to Christ in the course of that winter. I had the privilege of spending a few joyful days with the brethren in that revival. At Dormansville our labors did not appear to be attended with any special good results. There was only one person in the neighborhood, that I remember, who professed to experience religion during the whole year of my labors on Coeymans circuit, and she was blessed at a quarterly meeting at Greenville. How rejoiced was I to hear, after I left the circuit, that the labors of others *who occupied that field were owned and blessed*

of God, and that a commodious house of worship had been erected in that place. My soul has often been filled with gratitude when I have heard that God had blessed the efforts of my brethren to the awakening and conversion of individuals for whose salvation I had labored in vain.

One visit which I received while in Coeymans I shall long remember. The reader, by turning to page 5 of the Memoir of H. C. Wooster, will perceive that his sister, who had just found the Saviour, was the means of leading him to Christ. This sister was still living, and, with a relative of hers, came to my house. Her name by marriage was Gavitt, and she had for many years been a widow. Having heard of her brother, when I was but a boy, as an eminently holy minister, who had finished his work before I was born, it seemed a great privilege to me that I was permitted to entertain under my roof the person whom God had made the instrument of his conversion.

Recording this circumstance, brings to my mind the case of Carvosso, who was persuaded by *his* pious sister to turn to the Lord. It was about the time of my residence in Coeymans, I think, that I first perused that excellent, useful book, *the Life of Carvosso*. He resembled Wooster in *the strength* of his faith, but was spared to labor

much longer in this world of wickedness and woe for his blessed Master. For sixty years Carvosso faithfully discharged the duties of a class-leader. His Memoir must profit all who read it with attention and prayer.

CHAPTER VII.

NEW-ROCHELLE CIRCUIT.

AT the conference held in May, 1838, I was appointed to the New-Rochelle circuit. One of the parsonages was in Rye, and the other in New-Rochelle. I took up my abode in Rye, and commenced my labors among the people. Perhaps the insertion of an article which I furnished for a religious paper, about a year since, will be suitable in this place:—

[*For the Christian Advocate and Journal.*]

“Last Sabbath I was at a love-feast in F^{oooo}, among the L.’s, and the G.’s, and the F.’s, whose ancestors fled from the bloody sword of Louis XIV. to worship God in the wilds of America; and we felt that the God of our fathers was with us.” So said Samuel Merwin at a quarterly meeting in America, held in the spring of 1823. A young minister was present who had just offered himself as a probationer to the conference, and he felt a thrill of indescribable emotion pass through him when these words were uttered. He had read of the persecuted, exiled Huguenots, and of many of their brethren who had been slain in their own land for “the word of God and the testimony of Jesus.” And at the allusion just mentioned, his soul kindled with an ardent desire to be a faithful servant of the God of the martyrs.

It was on a pleasant morning in June, 1838, that this minister entered, for the first time, the ancient sanctuary in New-Rochelle, Westchester county, N. Y., known as the Upper

New-Rochelle Methodist church. Fifteen years had been spent in traveling and preaching the gospel; he had met with but a very few of the children of the exiled Protestants of France; but the *name* of the circuit where he was now commencing his labors reminded him of those sufferers for Christ, *Rochelle* in France having once been a stronghold of Protestantism. The names of the people also gave indication of their ancestry. Here were the Bonetts, Le Comptes, Lefevres, Gallaudets, Coutants, Reshays, Deveaus, Seacords, &c., &c. This old church in New-Rochelle was said to be the first Methodist house of worship built on the American continent, east or north of the city of New-York. Some years before it was built, Francis Asbury, of blessed memory, had visited the place, and preached Jesus to the people. In December, 1771, about six weeks after he first landed on our shores, he preached for the first time in this neighborhood. In those six weeks he had preached several times in Philadelphia, Burlington in New-Jersey, the city of New-York, and the town of Westchester, before he visited New-Rochelle. It was probably in June, 1787, that Bishop Asbury first preached in this church, and before his death he was permitted to do so several times. A few miles west of this house of prayer, in a neighborhood called Tuckahoe, was the residence of the Sherwood family, whose kindness to Asbury in sickness and in health he so frequently mentions in his Journal.

In the spring of 1838 the society had concluded to remove the old building and erect a more commodious one in its place. It is not surprising that the minister just arrived in the circuit, who was about to preach in that edifice for the first and the only time, and who knew that on the next day it was to be taken down, should have very solemn feelings as he ascended the pulpit-stairs to speak in the name of his Master. There was good reason to believe that not only *Asbury*, but *Whatecoat*, *M'Kendree*, *Wells*, *Abbott*, *Talbot*, *P. Moriarty*, *Van Nostrand*, *L. SMITH*, *Garrettson*, *† Morrell*, *† Phoebe*, *Brush*, *† SWAIN*, *R. CLOUD*, *† S. HUTCHINSON*, *† M. Combs*,

T. Woolsey, G. Roberts,† Totten, D. Brown, Canfield, J. Wilson, E. Cooper, DEWY, Kibby, Chichester, Thacher,† Ward, A. Hunt, Coleman, Sawyer, REDSTONE, B. Hibbard, Bull, Z. Lyon, Andrus, P. Peck, Thomas, Eames, Scauze, E. Smith, J. Lyon, Sykes, S. Merwin,† Arnold, Bushnell, N. Emory, Coles Carpenter, Ostrander,† Richardson, N. Bangs,† P. P. Sandford,† E. Woolsey, Jewett,† Seney, H. Bangs, R. Seaman, Laban Clark,† Martindale, P. Rice, John M. Smith, E. Hebard, Bowen, Cochran, De Vinne, E. Washburn, I. Ferris, B. Silleck, H. Husted, P. L. Hoyt, P. R. Brown, and T. Sparks, with many others not here named, had stood in that pulpit and proclaimed "the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God."^o And now it was to be occupied for the last time. The solemn thought was powerfully impressed on his mind that many of those servants of the Most High had finished their work and gone to their reward. He too was hastening to his long home, and to the day of his final account. He was led to call the attention of his hearers to the great things which God had done in the land, since their fathers erected that house of prayer, where they were now assembled. Among those whom God had raised up in that vicinity to go forth in search of the lost sheep of the house of Israel, were Aaron Hunt, Arnold Scholefield, and Theodosius Clark, under whose ministrations he had been blessed in the days of his childhood and youth, when they preached Jesus in his father's house in Connecticut.

Eleven years have rolled away since that solemn, joyful

^o Those whose names are marked thus (†) had been presiding elders in that district at some time prior to 1838. Those in italics are dead; the others are believed to be living, except those in small capitals, concerning whom the writer is uncertain whether they are dead or living. The names are recorded in the order of time in which they were first appointed to the district or circuit which included New-Rochelle, according to the writer's best information.

Sabbath morning, and the minister who preached in the old church in New-Rochelle at that time is still permitted to live and record some of his recollections in this article, while many who then listened to him are now in the world of spirits. May he be prepared to go also when the summons shall arrive!

The Rev. Parmele Chamberlin was my colleague on the circuit, and during the two years of our labor there we had cause to thank God for his blessing upon our efforts. Some gracious revivals took place among the people. We preached in Upper and Lower New-Rochelle, a part of Eastchester, Mamaroneck, Rye, Portchester, and King-street. In addition to the assistance of the local preachers, we were favored with most acceptable help from our superannuated father in Christ, Rev. Elijah Woolsey, who resided in Rye, and occasionally visited other parts of the circuit, laboring as far as strength would permit.

He was very much delighted, in the summer of 1833, when he witnessed a gracious revival of the work of God in that part of Rye where he resided, in which several of the young people were converted for whom he had felt a deep solicitude. I well remember with what animation this good old father in Israel expressed his feelings while the mourners and young converts were around the altar. The ardor of the soul seemed to raise the body for a time above the weakness of old age; and from the agility of his motion, and the vivacity of his manner, one might almost suppose that he would be ready for a second mission to Upper Canada as soon as the passing revival in Rye should subside.

Near the residence of Mr. Woolsey was the grave of Ezekiel Halstead, "the faithful class-leader," of whom some account was given in the Christian Advocate some time in 1838, the initials "E. H." being there used instead of the full name. His pious widow was then living, but has since died in the Lord. Although she resided, during the latter part of her life, in New-York, yet she occasionally visited

her friends in Rye, and by her maternal counsel and pious example encouraged us much in the service of the Lord. Two of her sons, who were merchants in the city, were the means, in the hands of God, of assisting in the commencement and progress of the revival which I have just noticed. While visiting their Christian friends in Rye, they were not unwilling to warn and invite the people "publicly, and from house to house." One of their brothers, William Halstead, died in the triumphs of faith in New-York while I resided in Rye.

Another instance of the power of divine grace to support the Christian in death occurred about this time but a few miles from New-Rochelle. A young minister, John D. Bangs, the son of a former colleague of mine, was called to part with his pious, beloved companion, and in one week afterward he also passed over Jordan into the land of rest. Amidst the great distress of body which he experienced in his last illness, his benevolence led him to exert his little remaining strength in pleading with one of the neighbors, who attended upon him, to give his heart to God. Recently, in passing through the place of his death and burial, I saw that neighbor, and learned from his own lips that the dying effort of the young minister (whose "ruling passion was strong in death") made an impression on his mind which never was erased till it led him to the mercy-seat.

E. OSBORN.

Besides the glorious revival in Rye in the summer of 1838, which I have mentioned in the preceding article, the Lord favored us with gracious manifestations of divine mercy in some other places. I particularly remember a good work in Mamaroneck, which caused much joy and gratitude in the hearts of the ministers and people

of God. During the progress of the revival we were very unexpectedly visited by that holy, yet singular man of God, James P. Horton. Several lay brethren from White Plains also came to labor with us. Our meetings were held both in the day and evening. The aged and the young were seen together pressing into the kingdom of grace.

In the autumn of 1838 the new church in Upper New-Rochelle was finished. It occupied the site of the old church, which had been taken down. The Sabbath appointed for the dedication of this new house proved to be stormy. Rev. Messrs. S. Martindale, F. Hodgson, and P. Chamberlin officiated in the morning, afternoon, and evening; and notwithstanding the severity of the storm, the presence of God was felt by his people in the house of prayer. The series of meetings which followed was made the means of good to some souls. The first person who found mercy in that new house of worship was a descendant of that pious, benevolent Mrs. Sherwood, whose Christian hospitality had cheered the laborious Asbury. Andrew Deveau, (a descendant of the Huguenots,) who took a deep interest in the erection of that house, has since finished his pilgrimage in peace. His spiritual father, Rev. Joshua Wells, of the Baltimore Conference, yet lives, I trust, waiting for the happy

hour when he shall be called to meet “
dren of his faith and prayers” in the
of God.

The reasonings and persuasions of the
of this circuit, and some other dear fri
duced me at the close of the conference
consent once more to be appointed th
year to the same circuit, thinking that I
had been mistaken in my views of dut
ther Chamberlin was again my collea
during the latter part of the year we
assistance of Rev. Samuel U. Fisher.
the circumstances which I shall hereaf
tion occurred during the first, and other
the second year of my residence in I
have I always thought it necessary to c
the year in which an occurrence too
Brothers W. Jewett and N. White were
siding elders under whose care I was suc
placed during these two years. Both
had manifested paternal kindness to me
was traveling among the mountains of I
county; and the same God who blesse
gether there, did not forget to answer c
ers in Westchester county. At Portch
saw some good accomplished, while we
vored with assistance from brother G.
croft, who had been converted while

on board of a ship of war, and who had become a minister in the New-York Conference. I believe it was at this good meeting that we also had some help from brothers White^o and Dunn, of the New-Jersey Conference.

The society in Lower New-Rochelle was also favored with some displays of God's mercy in awakening and converting sinners in that place. In this neighborhood I found (living with their pious relatives, J. G. Horton and his wife) two little children who were descendants of that pious mother in Israel, Mrs. Hick. She brought her religion, warm and glowing in her heart, from Ireland to America, and stirred up her lukewarm friends to lift up the banner of a free and full salvation by faith in this western world.* Here, too, I became acquainted with an aged pilgrim by the name of Gryce. Before the revolutionary war, her father's house in Maryland had been honored by the visits of that eminent servant of God, George Shadford. Her own table had often been surrounded by eminent heralds of the cross while she dwelt in the city of New-York. Among these was our venerable and la-

^o She was the means of collecting the first meeting of Methodists ever held in New-York—perhaps in America. See Bangs' *History of the Methodist Episcopal Church*, vol. 1, pp. 47, 51

borious superintendent, Francis Asbury. In her old age she was solaced by the kindness of an affectionate son-in-law and daughter, Mr. A. Banks and his wife, who resided in New-Rochelle. But "the best of all" was, *God was with her*. Before we left the circuit she was called to her home above, and brother Chamberlin preached her funeral sermon.

This short notice of Mrs. Gryce leads me to notice another eminently pious aged widow, who was a very near neighbor of ours in Rye. The place of her dwelling was very different in size and outward appearance from the mansion where Mrs. Gryce lived, and prayed, and died with her children; yet the humble dwelling of Jane Bowne (for that was the name of her to whom I now allude) was often felt to be a Bethel to ministers and other Christians who visited her. Greatly did she delight in the privileges of public worship and of class-meeting, while my family and myself esteemed it a great privilege to assist her in going to the house of the Lord. Her gratitude for temporal favors and religious visits was deep, and her patience under sufferings was exemplary. More than five years after I left this circuit, I crossed Long Island Sound to be present *at the* dedication of a new church among my old friends. I heard that Aunt Jane (as she was

familiarly called by young and old) was near her end. Hastening to her room, I found her speechless—possibly insensible; and while my voice was lifted up in prayer by her dying bed, the invisible messengers from the court of her Father bore her ransomed spirit to His royal palace. Will the reader pray that I and mine may meet her in glory?

The name of John Summerfield has long been dear to the memory of the Methodist—shall I not say to the whole American Church? yea, and to the Churches of Britain, his native island, also. Though I never saw him, yet I esteemed it a great favor to be permitted to look at some of the books which he had perused. This privilege I enjoyed at Rye, through the kindness of Mr. Summerfield's brother-in-law and sister, Mr. and Mrs. Blackstock, who resided in that place. Often, while casting my eye over those volumes, and listening to the interesting incidents concerning him which his friends, with mournful delight, would narrate, have I, in view of his glorious prospects of usefulness and his early death, exclaimed, in the language of the Apostle, "How unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out!"* By the same kind friends,

* I was much affected some years since when a member of our church in Brooklyn came to me in the yard of the

I was permitted to peruse a short letter in their possession, written by that zealous, laborious, and prayerful servant of Christ, William Bramwell. His printed letters, found in his "Life," had often proved a blessing to me, and this specimen of his handwriting revived the good impressions which had been made upon my mind.

Stamford circuit lay contiguous to ours on the east, and my dear brethren E. Oldrin, W. Gothard, and S. G. Stebbins, who labored on that circuit, kindly visited us, and rendered us occasionally some help, which was very acceptable. They seemed also very thankful for the feeble assistance which I could render them in the revivals which occurred in Stamford, Poundridge, Dantown, and one or two other places in that circuit, while it was under brother Oldrin's charge. In Stamford there was a gracious work ; and one of the lads converted in that revival was received, in 1848, into the New-York Conference as a traveling preacher. His name is B. M. Adams, the son of a local preacher, and the grandson of a departed soldier of the cross, John B. Matthias.

At Dantown I preached in a plain old church

Sands-street church, and leading me to a marble tablet, said, with gushing tears, "There lies the body of my spiritual father." I looked upon the marble, and read the name of SUMMERFIELD.

which had been built in the days of Jesse Lee, and probably it was the place where he rejoiced so greatly to meet with Brush, Roberts, and Smith when they came from Maryland to help him in his labors in New-England.* Hallowed associations were connected with that small unpainted sanctuary, which had stood unfinished for nearly forty years. Since I was there a new house of worship has been erected and finished, I believe not more than one or two miles from the former house.

Perhaps one cause which made my brethren in the ministry more willing to visit us in Rye, was the satisfaction they enjoyed in conversing with our aged brother Woolsey. When they could draw from him a description of some good meeting which he had enjoyed forty years before, in some log-cabin of the north or the west, it was very interesting. The account which he gave of some of his journeys through the wilderness in search of precious souls, for whom Christ died, was well calculated to stir up our zeal and increase our courage.†

While I resided in Rye that melancholy ca-

* See Stevens' Memorials of Methodism, p. 66.

† An interesting narrative of Mr. W.'s labors and travels may be found in "The Supernumerary," for sale by Lane and Scott, New-York. Price, 30 cents.

tastrophe occurred, the burning of the steamer Lexington on Long Island Sound, occasioning the awful death of very many individuals. I thought it my duty in a few places to preach discourses with special reference to that painful occurrence, and to make it the occasion of solemn warning and exhortation.

One of the most joyful seasons which I experienced in preaching the word of life during the term of my labor in Westchester county was in Greenburgh, where Rev. J. A. Sillick resided. My subject was Paul and Silas in the Philippian jail. The revival then in progress at that place was well calculated to encourage brother Sillick's heart. I saw but little of the good work myself, being there but a few days; but the accounts which I heard were very cheering. In this revival Rufus C. Putney (now a minister of the New-York Conference) was brought to the knowledge of the truth.

In '38 and '39 I attended five camp-meetings: two on Long Island, two in Sing Sing, and one in New-Prospect, near Paterson, N. J. At one of these camp-meetings we met with our aged sister in Christ, Mrs. Margaret Prior, of New-York. My wife had known and esteemed her for six or seven years, and at this camp-meeting persuaded her to return with us in the sloop

which came from the camp-ground to Rye. A sermon was preached on board of the vessel by Mr. Martindale, and one soul professed to find peace in believing while the minister was preaching. Mrs. Prior spent two weeks with us. Her holy walk with God, and her serious, yet cheerful and kind conversation, made us delight in her company, and led us to pray that we might follow her as she followed Christ. Those of my readers who have perused that excellent little book entitled "Walks of Usefulness, or Reminiscences of Mrs. M. Prior," will remember her zeal in doing good to the poor, both in relieving their temporal wants and giving them useful advice. A poor man, traveling on foot from New-Haven to New-York, called at my house in Rye for food, and was supplied while Mrs. P. was there. This friend of the friendless improved

- the opportunity to caution this youth against intemperance, after having, in a very kind and prudent manner, drawn from him an acknowledgment of having indulged in that sin. Before he left, she kneeled down in the hall, through which he passed to the outer door, and prayed for and with the stranger, whom she had never seen before, and probably would never see again in this world. I was absent from home; but my wife, who could hear the prayer from the

room where she was sitting, remarked that no mother could have prayed more fervently for an only son than she prayed for that poor wanderer.

I was induced to attend the camp-meeting at New-Prospect, N. J., by the kind invitation of my friend Samuel Halsted, of New-York, who had some acquaintance with the preachers and members in that part of the vineyard of the Lord. It was his delight, when his business and the cares of his family permitted, to go out in the country, and especially to the tented grove, to worship God and labor for the salvation of souls. I rejoice to believe that he is still not weary in well-doing. The kindness of the New-Jersey preachers and people fully equaled the expectations which I had formed from brother Halsted's remarks. Among these kind friends I well remember were Horatio Moses, of Paterson; Rev. W. Burrows, then presiding elder of that district; Rev. William Roberts, now missionary to Oregon; and Rev. Mulford Day, then laboring in that part of New-Jersey.

I had scarcely reached the ground before I was requested by brother Roberts to go with him into a prayer-meeting, where a young woman was crying for mercy. "It is a very interesting case," said he, "as she is the daughter of an excellent minister, who died when she was

but a child." I inquired his name, and learned that it was John Robertson. My feelings were much moved, for I had often heard him spoken of with affection eight years before this, when I preached in the region between Pittsfield and Albany. I had there heard a pious Christian in love-feast say, "Twenty-two years ago, when that dear man of God, John Robertson, was praying for me, the Lord converted my soul." I had read in the Minutes of Conference the account of his peaceful death, but knew nothing of his family till I found his daughter pleading for the blessing of God at this camp-meeting. The God of her father met her in mercy, and blessed her; and, if I mistake not, her sister sought and obtained an interest in Christ at the same meeting. I think it was here that I formed a very pleasing acquaintance with Rev. Henry Boehm, for many years the traveling companion of Bishop Asbury. He still lives, (March, 1849,) and has recently gratified the readers of the Christian Advocate with a sketch of former days.

The second revival which took place in Rye while I resided there, was rendered more interesting to me by the conversion of my eldest daughter. In this meeting, as well as on other occasions, my friend S. Halstead, with other friends from New-York, came out to labor with

us. Their help was the more necessary at this time, because my want of health kept me at home part of the time. My colleagues, too, could not be there constantly, on account of their duties in other parts of the circuit. At the close of an excellent meeting, on the evening of a certain Sabbath when I had been detained by indisposition, brother H. came to my room rejoicing in the displays of mercy which he had witnessed, and shouting the praises of God.

Before I left this circuit, the man who resided where Thomas Paine formerly dwelt professed conversion. The very room where that noted infidel used to read and write has been my bed-chamber; and there I have sung with deep emotion, in my favorite tune of *Old Hundred*, these lines:—

“Jesus shall reign where’er the sun
Does his successive journeys run;
His kingdom spread from shore to shore,
Till moons shall wax and wane no more.”

It was very pleasant to see the zeal and liberality of our brethren and sisters of this circuit in the missionary cause, manifested by giving, in one year, more than two hundred dollars to that important and benevolent object.

Besides the brethren whom I have already named as having assisted us in our gospel labors,

I would gratefully mention the names of some others whom I recollect as being occasional fellow-laborers with us; namely, J. B. Stratton, J. Lindsey, S. D. Ferguson, N. Bangs, G. Coles, E. E. Griswold, S. L. Stillman, J. L. Dickerson, B. Creagh, A. S. Francis, S. C. Perry, and J. Davies.

In the spring of 1840 that distinguished English minister, Robert Newton, visited America. At the anniversaries of the Methodist Missionary Society, in the Green-street church, and of the American Bible Society, in the Broadway Tabernacle, I was charmed and melted by his simple, yet powerful eloquence; and thousands around me seemed to be carried away by the same resistless flood. But perhaps I was benefited more by a sermon which he preached from these words, "Beloved, now are we the sons of God," &c., than by anything else which I heard from his lips. Never can I forget the solemn manner in which he urged the importance of ascertaining that we are "*now*" "the sons of God." "I do not ask you," said he, "what you were *once*, but what are you *now*?" Satan was *once* an angel of light; but what does that avail him *now* that he is 'reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day?'"

Immense crowds flocked to hear Mr. Newton

in every place he visited. In one instance the house was completely filled; and a vast crowd being without anxious to hear him, he consented to preach first to them, and then entered the church and delivered a discourse to those within. I have often thought of an expression which it is said that he used when the calls upon him for ministerial labor were frequent and pressing:—"There are two things," said he, "for which a minister should always be ready,—to *preach*, and to *die*."

CHAPTER VIII.

HARLEM MISSION AND FLUSHING.

My next field of labor was called the Harlem Mission. It embraced four churches, one at each of the following places; namely, Harlem, Yorkville, Forty-first-street, and Twenty-seventh-street, in the upper part of the city of New-York. The whole number of members and probationers in all of these churches when I went there, in the summer of 1840, was about two hundred and thirty.

While my family and myself were waiting for the arrival of our furniture, my kind friend, Rev. David Terry, with true Christian hospitality, made us welcome to his abode. Brother Terry was then superintendent of the House of Refuge, an institution very necessary and beneficial to a large city.

The large proportion of floating population in the suburbs of a great metropolis, the great number of Sabbath-breakers who pour out of the heart of the city by railroad, stages, and all manner of conveyance, together with many other circumstances, made this field of labor somewhat unpromising. I had the assistance of brother

S. U. Fisher, who labored as my colleague, and Dr. R. Seaman, a supernumerary preacher, who resided at Harlem; but as the churches generally expected three sermons on each Sabbath, it was necessary to enlist considerable help from the local preachers in the city; and I would thankfully acknowledge that this help was cheerfully rendered.

In the summer of 1840 I attended an excellent camp-meeting at Hempstead Harbor, on Long Island. Some account of it, which I wrote soon after its close, I will here transcribe. On the morning of Monday, August 17th, a large number of persons embarked in the Croton, Captain Peck, at New-York, for the camp-ground. Our passage was both rapid and pleasant, and the people of God improved a large portion of the time in singing and prayer. An exhortation was given on board of the boat by a young local preacher, in which he cautioned us against many things which might tend to prevent our receiving and doing good at the camp-meeting. We were particularly advised not to waste our precious time in mere casual, desultory conversation, while so much was to be done for God and for precious souls.

There had been public worship on the ground on the previous day, as a number of the friends

were there who had been employed for a few days in erecting tents, &c. On Monday afternoon a sermon was preached, in which we were urged to sobriety and vigilance, because our adversary the devil was walking about seeking to prevent us from growing in grace, and to hinder us from doing good at that camp-meeting. The danger of being prolix in vocal prayer was also clearly presented to our minds.

At this camp-meeting there appeared to be much less useless chit-chat among ministers and professors than is usual on such occasions. When they spent a few moments in conversing with each other, they were frequently heard speaking on the deep things of God. Some rather extraordinary efforts were made to call the attention of that part of the congregation who were wandering from place to place during the intervals between the sermons. Many were induced to listen to the word of exhortation and come into the prayer-meetings, which were numerous in the vast encampment. Scarcely a moment passed, from early dawn till ten o'clock at night, in which the voice of prayer and praise could not be heard from different parts of the consecrated grove, unless it was in time of preaching from the stand.

The ministers of the gospel appeared to labor *with great unanimity* of feeling, and strong de-

sire for the salvation of souls, and almost every sermon seemed to be attended with an extraordinary degree of divine influence ; and the shouts of praise to God from the lips of his people, indicated that his word was sweet to their taste. Many of the sermons were short, and were followed by warm exhortations.

The blessing of perfect love was a subject frequently mentioned in preaching, exhortation, and prayer. Meetings were repeatedly held in some of the smaller tents, where prayer was offered, especially for this blessing ; and much time was profitably spent by our friends in speaking of their exercises on this glorious subject. It is believed that these meetings will be remembered by some with great joy in another world. My companion and myself were powerfully blessed in one of these select meetings.

The Rev. B. Griffin, who judiciously superintended the meeting, aided by the camp-meeting committee, was enabled to preserve very good order. The people generally did themselves much honor by their attention to decorum in this forest-temple of the Almighty. So powerful was the influence of the good Spirit on the feelings of many, that their bodily strength was suspended in some instances for hours together. One individual, who probably had never attended

a camp-meeting before, came on Monday and left on Tuesday; but could not rest without returning to the meeting, and seeking the mercy of God till it was obtained.

On Friday afternoon a sermon was preached in aid of the Bible Society, which had a powerful influence on the congregation. The collections and subscriptions amounted to one hundred and eighty dollars, which sum was appropriated to make the venerable Bishop Roberts a life director, and brother B. Griffin a life member, of the American Bible Society.*

On the last evening when the congregation was collected to hear the word of life, I surveyed from a little eminence the vast concourse of hearers assembled beneath the beautiful branches of the trees, rendered still more beautiful by the light of numerous lamps. While gazing on this interesting scene, I reflected on the vast number that had been converted on that ground within a few days, and on the multitude who, in former years, had met with the same happy change at similar meetings on the same hallowed spot. Then my mind cast a glance still further back—to the days when Benjamin Abbott traveled over

* I believe it was the Rev. Edmund S. Janes (now a bishop of our Church) who was so successful in pleading the cause of benevolence on this occasion.

Long Island as one circuit, and Methodists were few and far between. I thought it quite possible that he, or some other holy man of God in those days, might have bowed his knees in secret prayer on that very spot, as he rested for a few moments on his long journey from one appointment to another. There, perhaps, he might have cried most earnestly, "Thy kingdom come!—Thy kingdom come!" While I beheld this scene, and indulged these thoughts, solemn and joyful feelings pervaded my mind; and the language of my heart was, "How goodly are thy tents, O Jacob! and thy tabernacles, O Israel!"

There were some of our brethren who employed the whole of the last night in solemnly worshiping the prayer-hearing God of wrestling Jacob—of prevailing Israel.

At three o'clock in the morning the trumpet was blown, and a few friends, according to request, walked around among the tents singing hymns, and thus awaking, with melodious songs of praise, those of us who were quietly sleeping. After a very early breakfast, at about half-past five o'clock, we were called to the stand for the last time. Here we were permitted to spend *some time* in speaking of the goodness of God, *and truly* we felt it was good to be there. When *the closing* prayer had been offered, the congre-

gation formed themselves into a circular procession, and passing before the stand, gave the parting hand to each of the ministers, and bade them a solemn farewell.

It was thought that about two hundred and twenty-seven persons professed to find the pardoning love of God, and about eighty to receive the blessing of sanctification at this camp-meeting. This was the opinion of a minister from New-York, who made particular inquiry in each tent as to the number who had been specially blessed. Truly the text was fulfilled which was used on a previous Sabbath by a minister who preached on the ground:—"Ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence."

While returning in the steamer to the city, we engaged in singing, prayer, and witnessing for the Lord. During these exercises one person, who had been seeking Jesus for three months, was powerfully converted to God. Surely that was indeed A GLORIOUS CAMP-MEETING.*

We did not wholly confine ourselves to preaching in the churches of the Harlem mission; but occasionally in private houses, and even in the open air, the word of life was proclaimed to the

* It was on this occasion that I gave a message to good old brother Horton, to be carried to Mr. Wesley in paradise. See Part I. of this narrative, page 114.

people. The first special revival which we witnessed was in Harlem. The indications of mercy induced us to continue our meetings evening after evening for about four weeks. It was thought that twenty-five or thirty persons in that time bowed to the sceptre of Prince Immanuel.

Rose Hill (as the vicinity of the church in Twenty-seventh-street was called) was not wholly destitute of showers of reviving mercy ; but the most powerful revival which we had during the year, was in our church in Forty-first-street. One sermon, preached there by brother J. W. Redfield, a local preacher, seemed to make a most deep and solemn impression on the hearers. It is but a few weeks since I was reminded by a brother, who was present at that meeting, of a circumstance that I had forgotten which occurred that evening. It was the conversion of a Dutch or German woman, who, with a thankful heart, in broken English, expressed her surprise in finding "dis religion" so very good.

In the vicinity of this church there were many German families, who knew but little of our language. When Dr. Nast, from Cincinnati, visited New-York, he permitted me, in compliance with my earnest request, to make an appointment for *him to preach one sermon, at the church in Forty-first-street, to the Germans in the language*

of their fatherland. Since that time a German Home Mission has been established in that part of the city, which has been rendered a blessing to the German population.

Near my residence at Rose Hill was the City Alms-house, where many hundreds of the poor received the bounty of the public. Amidst my other numerous duties, I endeavored to find time occasionally to visit that vast assemblage of the poor. To visit and relieve the poor is not only a work required by the God of mercy, but it is also a privilege, in the improvement of which we "shall be blessed in the deed." Here I met with an old man who had personally waited on Mr. Wesley. He had been a servant in some family in England where Wesley was entertained. A good old sister by the name of Brown, residing near the church in Forty-first-street, took much delight in talking of the opportunity which she had once enjoyed of hearing Wesley preach in Ireland, and of receiving the consecrated bread and wine from his hands when they were withered by age. I have remarked that almost all those who have told me that they had seen John Wesley have mentioned the impressiveness of his countenance. On one occasion an old pilgrim remarked to me, that "*even his countenance was a sermon.*"

Several of the stationed ministers in the city visited the churches on our mission, rendering us acceptable service. In return, I likewise endeavored occasionally to preach the word of life in their pulpits. I have always believed it advantageous for ministers frequently to exchange with each other, and especially to assist each other in times of revival. Then, surely, the Church should unite her forces and put on strength.

In several of the large churches in New-York a meeting is held on Saturday evening, for the purpose of speaking of the goodness of God. With some little inconvenience I attended several of these meetings with great comfort, and I hope with some lasting benefit to my soul. Several brethren and sisters in different parts of the city manifested much kindness to me, especially on the occasion of a donation visit at my own dwelling.

The churches under my care were deeply in debt. Great exertions were necessary to pay the interest, and do something toward reducing the principal. The minister was expected, by personal solicitation, to do much toward this object. This work has always been disagreeable to my feelings; but when duty evidently required *it I have submitted*, and in so doing have been *mercifully blessed*.

At the close of the conference year we ascertained that, during the year, eighty-three persons had united with our societies as probationers. It was decided to divide the charge into two parts, putting two churches in each section. The brethren in the more able section, embracing Rose Hill church, concluded no longer to look for aid from the Missionary Society. The other section received a small appropriation for one or two years longer.

It was some time in March, 1841, while I was standing in the Book-Room at New-York, conversing with a brother, that a minister, who had recently officiated as chaplain to the Senate of the United States, entered the building, and passed by us into another room. "That is Mr. Cookman!" said I to an intimate friend of mine, who was a clerk in the Book-Room. "Is it possible!" said he; "is that George G. Cookman, the chaplain of Congress? One so unassuming in his appearance, so very plain in his dress!" Some years before this I had heard Mr. C. preach a sermon, that I shall not soon forget, from this text:—"The word of God is not bound." One single remark in his introduction I will endeavor to give to the reader as correctly as I can:—"When Paul wrote this epistle he was chained in prison, under sentence of death. Methinks I

see him as he dips the pen in the ink. The chain rattles on his arm as he moves his hand. But the Apostle remembers that 'the word of God is not bound.' They may chain the messenger, but they cannot chain the message. That will 'run and be glorified.' " A few days after I saw him, he embarked for Europe, on a short visit to his aged father. Before he left he said to his little children, "If your father should sink in the ocean you must meet him in the paradise of God." Soon after he left America, I met a Presbyterian lady who had heard him preach his last sermon in the capitol. She spoke very highly of that discourse, which was founded on a passage of Scripture including these words:—"The sea gave up the dead that were in it." Little did we then think that the steamship President, in which he had sailed, would never be seen or heard of again and the eloquent voice of G. G. Cookman be heard on earth no more.

In 1841 our conference met in the Allen-street church, in New-York. The same scruples of conscience which I had felt in 1836, '37, and '38, now led me to ask for some new field of labor. Accordingly, I was appointed to the pleasant village of Flushing, on Long Island about eight or nine miles from New-York. There *had been* a very powerful revival of religion in

this place in the summer of 1839. Many who were converted in that revival were still pressing on to the heavenly country ; but there were others who had wandered from the fountain of living waters. One of our class-leaders was a brother with whom I had been permitted to labor in other places, and with much satisfaction. In the summer of that year I went to a camp-meeting at Jamesport, on the east part of the island, about eighty miles from New-York. It was good to be there.

During the year some were awakened ; and occasionally we heard the cry of the mourner, and the shout of the convert at our altar. Several ministers visited and assisted us, among whom were Heman Bangs, John Poisal, W. C. Hawley, and J. W. Redfield.

At a place called Middle Village, in Newtown, not far from Flushing, there was a blessed work of God in the autumn of 1841. Some part of this good work I was permitted to witness. In one instance the cry of the mourner was heard in the street, as he returned from the church to his dwelling. On a certain evening a sermon was preached from this text :—" Because there is wrath, beware lest he take thee away with his stroke, and then a great ransom cannot deliver thee." The possibility of sudden death was

dwelt upon by the minister who preached, and by him who followed in exhortation. The sinner was urged to prepare for death, that if it came suddenly he might find sudden death to be sudden glory, and not sudden, everlasting destruction. Before noon of the next day a man, who had heard those remarks, fell suddenly to the floor and quickly expired.

In this neighborhood resided two old disciples of Christ, Joseph Harper and his wife, who have since departed to their blessed home. Mr. Harper was a man of deep humility and sincere piety, but rather prone, I should think, to write bitter things against himself. I believe his father's house was honored by the preaching of Captain Webb, one of the pioneers of Methodism in America. Mrs. Harper was a woman of uncommon zeal, simplicity, and courage in the cause of God. She had been a faithful follower of Christ for half a century, having been converted to God while Father Abbott and John B. Matthias were praying for her. She possessed a readiness of utterance which made it very interesting to hear her joyful testimonies for God. She was what is sometimes called a shouting Christian; and her daily walk evinced the sincerity of her heart, and the genuineness of her religion. A minister of several years standing in

the church informed me that, when a youth, he boarded in her family about five years. In all that time he never discovered any manifestation of feeling or temper in her which he thought inconsistent with the perfect love of God. While favored with the very kind hospitality of these aged servants of Christ, I had reason to believe that she rose very early to read and pray. To camp-meetings they were both much attached; and with steps trembling through age, they would find their way from the tent to the stand at the hour of preaching. When the sermon was closed, the prayer-meeting was eagerly sought and enjoyed. The wealth and elevation to which their children* attained, appeared not in the least to excite the vanity of these humble, aged Christians. They have finished their course. They "rest from their labors, and their works do follow them."

A larger house of worship in Flushing, and in a more suitable location, being thought necessary, subscriptions for that object were obtained; but the expense being more than could well be sustained entirely by the small society in that place, I was requested to obtain some aid, if possible, from our friends in New-York, many of whom

* One of them, Hon. James Harper, has since been mayor of the city of New-York.

were well acquainted with our circumstances in Flushing. While attending to this somewhat embarrassing duty, I was invited to labor with some of my brethren in the ministry where God was reviving his work. In the Green-street church, then under the care of brother H. Bangs, I enjoyed some very happy seasons.

Perhaps none of the Methodist churches in the city were favored with a greater revival of religion in that year than the Willet-street church then under the care of Rev. Marvin Richardson. If my recollection be correct, not far from two hundred and fifty were admitted on probation as the fruits of that revival. I find, by reference to the Minutes, that the *net* increase for the year was two hundred and eighteen. I was permitted to witness a few of the glorious scenes in that revival, which was rendered a blessing to my soul. I will here add, that in the course of the following year the new church in Flushing was erected; and my prayer is, that it may long be filled with the glory of God, and honored with the awakening, conversion, and sanctification of souls.

CHAPTER IX.

SMITHTOWN CIRCUIT.

AFTER some very unpleasant disappointments as to conveyance, I arrived with my family and furniture at Smithtown early in June, 1842. The journey was performed by water. Smithtown is about fifty miles east of the city of New-York, on Long Island. My colleague was Timothy C. Youngs, a brother who was in the second year of his ministerial probation. We preached at Smithtown Landing, Smithtown Branch, Hopogues, Comac, Stony Brook, Port Jefferson, East Middle Island, Westfield, and the Ronconkamby Pond. Brothers Hammond and Worth, local preachers on the circuit, helped us in our regular appointments. My residence was in Smithtown Branch, where, at that time, there was no Methodist church. Hence, for two years, I had the privilege of preaching at stated seasons, in my "own hired house," the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. In the course of the summer after my removal to Smithtown, a camp-meeting was held at Hempstead Harbor. It was under the superintendence of the presiding elder of the district, Mr. Martindale. The last day of the meeting

was a memorable occasion. The sermon, preached by an aged brother, seemed to be attended with more of the *melting* influences of the good Spirit than I have often witnessed. My dear colleague received a great blessing. At the close of the sermon, in compliance with the request of the presiding elder, I gave an invitation to persons desirous of finding pardon to manifest it by coming forward and kneeling down. The numbers who came, the readiness with which they came, and the earnestness which they manifested after they had come, were truly affecting to the pious beholder. In the course of about two hours it was thought that about twenty souls were converted to God, and other mourners probably were blessed after they left the ground.

Another camp-meeting was held a few weeks later in Jamesport, near Riverhead. Here I met with an old veteran of the cross from Middletown, Conn., the Rev. Daniel Burrows, a local preacher of our Church. The first annual conference ever held in Connecticut, and one of the first held in New-England, met in brother Burrows' house, in 1795. For a very interesting description of this conference, see page 335 of Stevens' Memorials of Methodism. Brother Burrows was a member of Congress from Connecticut many years ago ; but the simple religion of

Jesus Christ was to him the most pleasing theme of conversation. My interview with him at this camp-meeting, and a letter which I received from him a few months afterward, had a very beneficial influence on my religious feelings.

Soon after this camp-meeting I was somewhat afflicted with a cough, which continued for several months, and during a part of the time prevented me from laboring as much in the vineyard of the Lord as I could have desired. It is possible that preaching too loud in the evening air at the camp-meeting was the means of commencing this affliction.

A protracted meeting in Comac, held, I think, in October, resulted in the addition of twenty-three probationers to the society. At this meeting we had the assistance of Rev. O. Starr, and my nephew, Rev. David Osborn. After this meeting, in consequence of my troublesome cough, I was prevented from laboring in public at all for about six weeks. Many of my friends and neighbors perhaps thought that my health would never be restored. I considered it somewhat uncertain, but was enabled to rejoice in the blessed truth, "The Lord reigneth."

In November or December, having partially recovered, I went with our presiding elder to Riverhead, where my nephew was residing, to

attend a protracted meeting. Here I met brothers Stout and Redfield. Though, from want of health, I was able to do but little myself, yet the Lord blessed the labors of others, and a number were brought to the knowledge of the truth.

In a place called East Middle Island, in the town of Brookhaven, a small Methodist church had been built a few months before I went to that circuit. Before this house was built, the little company of brethren used to meet in the school-house belonging to the public. At length prejudice rose so high, that when brother Martindale had an appointment to preach there, the house was locked against him and his hearers; but as the evening was pleasant, he preached in the street to the listening company. The society, though only about sixteen in number, now thought it best to build a small house of worship. As the population was not very dense, it was thought that if they could build a house large enough to accommodate two hundred persons, it would be far better than none. A series of meetings (continuing perhaps ten or fifteen days) had followed the dedication, and resulted in the conversion of a few souls. Soon after this six persons joined the little church on probation, then under the *charge* of my predecessor, Rev. S. W. King. It *was nearly a year* subsequent to the dedication,

when we resolved to hold another protracted meeting in that church.

Some of God's people, and among them two or three ministers who were acquainted in the place, had strong faith that a revival would crown the special effort. We commenced our meeting in the latter part of December, 1842, with a small company, on a week-day afternoon, by an address founded on this motto :—"The battle is the Lord's." The people of God in adjacent places had been previously requested to pray especially for the blessing of God upon this meeting. It was now a question with us whether we should hold our meetings on each successive day and evening, or only on every evening. Fears were expressed that the number of hearers would be very small, except in the evening. At length we determined to meet, at least for a season, both in the day, at eleven o'clock, and at half-past six in the evening. The event proved that our fears were groundless.

At an early period an opportunity was given for Christians to confess their faults, acknowledge the goodness of God, tell of their desires for perfect love, and their solicitude for the salvation of others. These short exercises, which generally were near the close of each meeting, were very beneficial during the whole course of the

revival. It was not long after the commencement of the meeting before one individual after another, in compliance with our invitation, manifested a desire to flee from the wrath to come. The first person who professed to find mercy was a young married woman. Not long before our meeting she had heard one of the ministers preach, and then remarked that she had never heard one of that class of ministers preach before, and never wished to hear one again; yet now, through the blessing of God upon the labors of these same ministers, she was brought to rejoice in the Saviour. Now she expressed very strong desires for the conversion of those members of her father's family who were yet out of Christ.

Notwithstanding we could obtain but a small amount of ministerial help from a distance, yet the people continued to throng the house day after day and evening after evening. My state of health was not such as to admit of my laboring much in the evenings; but on nearly every day my feeble voice was lifted up in my Master's cause. Brother Youngs was able and willing to do more than I could in this blessed work. The brethren and sisters in the place rejoiced to see their Christian friends from Port Jefferson, Westfield, Patchogue, &c., come in occasionally to worship with them. I can never forget the fer-


vent prayers, warm exhortations, and especially the animated devotional singing of some of those brethren. O may I hear them sing the sweet song of redeeming love in the kingdom of God!

Will the reader permit me to be more minute in detailing circumstances and describing particular cases in this revival than is usual in such narratives? And yet many individual cases (perhaps equally interesting with some that I shall mention) must be left unnoticed, through fear of prolixity.

One man, more than fifty years old, who had at times tried to rest on the doctrine of universal salvation, was seriously and affectionately interrogated on the subject of religion by a minister of the gospel. The preacher, having met with him at a neighbor's house, learned, by inquiry of him, that he was somewhat serious. Soon afterward this man rose up for our prayers in the congregation. On the following evening he was advised to pray in his family, and attempted to do so. The next day he told one of the ministers that he had slept but little through the previous night, from a deep sense of his guilt and depravity. He added, that in trying to look to God he had been relieved of his burden, though he had not yet received a clear witness of his acceptance, nor did he feel any transports of joy.

One of the ministers lodged under his roof that night. In the morning he came to the door of the minister's bed-chamber, inquired if he had been sufficiently refreshed by sleep, and receiving an affirmative answer, he said, "Then I wish you would get up and help me praise the Lord." "Do you feel like praising the Lord?" inquired the minister. "Yes," was the reply, "I am full! I am full! and had I not suppressed my feelings, I should have kept you and my family awake in the night by praising the Lord. Night before last I could not sleep for distress of mind, and last night I could not sleep for joy. Now I could enjoy heaven, but I could not have enjoyed it before." That was a happy morning to his pious wife. "This," said she, "is what I have been praying for nearly thirty years."

A certain woman (who had once professed religion) rose for prayers, and afterward invited two or three Christian friends to dine at her house. To them she manifested her sorrow for her unfaithfulness in the service of her God, and her anxiety for the conversion of her husband. One of the Christians present conversed with the husband for a few minutes on the all-important subject, and he manifested some degree of concern about his soul. In a few days this concern evidently increased, and he at length acknow-



ledged it by going to the mourners' seat. He was advised to pray in his family, and following this advice he gained the blessing, and rejoiced in the pardoning mercy of God. A younger brother* and sister of this convert, residing under the same roof, were soon induced to seek the great salvation; and both of them were enabled to rejoice with their brother and his wife in possession of the pearl of great price. •

A man, whose wife was a follower of Christ, had long sought the favor of the Divine Being, and in different revivals he had asked the prayers of Christians. Unwilling to give up the pursuit, he was found among the mourners in this revival; but, while others were blessed, he remained day after day without the desired witness. After the close of one of the meetings, a minister perceived this man in some difficulty with his horse and wagon, and assisted him out of this difficulty. He had proceeded but a few yards before he encountered other obstructions, and again the minister laid hold of the carriage and rendered the needful assistance. Taking occasion, from this circumstance, to encourage his friend in seeking the Lord, he said, "There is nothing like perseverance, Mr. H., nothing like perseve-

* This young man died in the Lord before I left Smithtown circuit.

rance in getting out of a bad situation into a good one." The mourner's looks indicated that he understood the designed application. On the next Sabbath the house of worship was so full, that many who could not get in listened at the open door and window. The same minister, after having preached and commenced the prayer-meeting, was obliged to leave the house, so as to reach his afternoon appointment in season. As the most ready way to escape quickly and quietly from such a crowd he stepped out of the window, and here he met his awakened friend H. standing without. "Go in, my friend," said the minister, "and join with the other mourners in praying for a blessing." Gladly did he enter the window, to unite with the praying company; and in a few days the minister met with his friend H., and found him peacefully trusting in the merits of Christ.

One of the preachers, in passing the house of a pious widow of another denomination, embraced this opportunity to call there and converse with the family. This short call, perhaps, removed some prejudices from the good woman's mind, and was the means of fastening conviction on the consciences of her two daughters. One of them *remarked*, after she found peace in believing, "*When I sought the Lord, I made up my mind*

to give up my young companions ; but now they all appear to be coming to the blessed Saviour too."* A younger daughter of this family also embraced religion very shortly after her sister's conversion. In a few days their married sister, living six or seven miles distant, came up to her mother's house on a visit. Before her return, she gave up her heart to God ; and finding religion to be a glorious treasure, she " with a loud voice glorified God."

It may be here remarked, that one of the most efficient means of carrying on this blessed work was the testimony of God's goodness, given by young converts. At the close of almost every meeting an opportunity was given for them briefly to witness for their Lord and Master. This opportunity was improved by many, and their testimonies were evidently attended with the divine blessing. Nor did they confine their efforts to those meetings. Frequently they spoke to their friends and neighbors personally on that subject which had become so dear to their hearts. Some of them immediately saw good effects resulting

* In this case, and in many others where I have attempted, in my account of this revival, to give the expressions of the converts and their friends, I do not pretend to remember every word and phrase precisely ; but I have given the language as nearly as I could recollect it, assisted by memoranda, made shortly after the events took place.

from their endeavors, and with thankful hearts, and streaming eyes beheld their dear friends coming over on the side of truth and religion.

One young woman, who was converted in the early part of the revival, felt deeply anxious for her unconverted father. Two ministers were invited to call and take dinner at their house. Serious conversation with the father led him to acknowledge the reality and importance of religion. At length he consented to bear the cross, and come to the altar for prayer. At one time, when the crowd was so great that he could not well get through the aisle, he stepped over the seats to the mourners' bench. It was very affecting to see a man of gray hairs, and with infirm steps, pressing through difficulties to ask the prayers of Christians for his conversion. He did not seek in vain. As I entered the house of prayer, not long after this, the good news greeted my ear that this aged friend was rejoicing in God with his praying daughter. This man, after his conversion, improved almost every opportunity which he had to witness for his kind Deliverer. Often would he exhort the young not to defer repentance as he had done. In so doing they would debar themselves from true happiness for *the best part* of their lives, and run the fearful *risk of dying* unprepared, and suffering the bitter

pangs of eternal death. They had no certainty that they would live half as many years as he had done. They might be cut off suddenly.

In this revival, the prayers which had been offered in past years by those who had gone home to paradise, appeared to be graciously answered. "I have no doubt," said a widowed lady just converted to God, "that my departed husband, while living, has sometimes spent the whole night in prayer to God for my poor soul. I felt almost constrained, when I found mercy, to go to his grave and weep tears of gratitude for his prayers."

Another remarkable case, among those converted at this meeting, was a man who had long been a profane swearer. He was the child of pious parents, one of whom had passed into the heavens, and the other was waiting, amidst the infirmities of old age, for the conversion of her son. I believe that he had never been seen at either of the houses of worship in that place before this revival. A neighbor of his, who went to the altar as a seeker, accidentally lost his hat in the crowd, and was looking for it at the close of the services. This man said, (probably in sport,) "Never mind your hat, if you have set out for the kingdom of heaven, never mind your hat." A very different exclamation was uttered

by him a few days afterward. When the minister asked those who wished the prayers of Christians to draw near the altar, this man rose up, crying out with a loud voice, "Pray for me!" I think it was on the next evening that both he and his eldest daughter were set at liberty by divine power and grace.* "All the days of my life, thus far, have been week-days," said he, "and now I feel as though I wanted to spend all the remaining days of my life as Sabbaths to the Lord." On a certain day, soon after his conversion, he had some very disagreeable manual labor to perform; but instead of such profane expressions of impatience as he formerly would have uttered under such circumstances, his lips were now employed in praising that Holy Name which he had so often profaned.

One of the converts was a native of Ireland, and had been educated a Roman Catholic. At the first meeting which he attended in this revival he felt a strong dislike to the preacher; yet on the next evening he ventured to go again, when his heart was touched, melted, and, I believe, comforted also. This was on a Wednesday evening. Not long after this, he said in one of our meetings, "I have often been to the priest

* Nearly a year after this revival, I think, his wife became a Christian.

with money to confess my sins, but I never got such a pardon before as I got last Wednesday evening. My worldly disappointments have led me sometimes to wish myself back again in my native land ; but now I thank God that I ever came to America, for here I have found better riches than I knew anything about when I left Ireland."

So great was the anxiety of the people to attend the meetings, that many were constrained to return home for want of a place even to stand in the house. Our brethren of another denomination, who occupied a larger house of worship in the neighborhood, invited us to remove the meeting to their house ; but as a number had been awakened and some converted in our small church, and Christians had become accustomed to work there in this revival, it was feared that the minds of those most deeply concerned might be diverted from the great object before them by removing the meeting to another place. We therefore continued to meet in our humble sanctuary, which had so often been made a Bethel to our souls ; and it was very gratifying to us to see Christians of different denominations, who met with us, bearing a part in the exercises of divine worship, and laboring to lead sinners to *Christ*.

A young school-teacher dismissed his school for a few days, that he might attend the meetings in the day as well as in the evening ; remarking to his pious, widowed mother that his anxiety of mind was such that he could not do justice to his scholars. On the next Saturday evening, after returning home from the church, he retired to the barn for private prayer. When he came into the house, his mother ascertained, by inquiry, that he had not received a satisfactory evidence of his acceptance, and gave him such advice as her piety and maternal affection dictated. After he retired to his chamber, his mother, who was listening near the door with deep solicitude, heard his supplications for a blessing. At length she heard him say, "I shall be there at nine o'clock," alluding to a prayer-meeting* appointed in the church for the next morning before preaching. It was not long before the parent thought she heard him call her. Opening the door at the foot of the stairs, she inquired, "G****, did you call me?" "Yes, mother, I did," was the reply; "I want you to come up here and help me praise the Lord! This chamber is the most beautiful place that I ever saw." This mother

* Almost invariably, the sermon was preceded and succeeded by a short prayer-meeting. In this case it was appointed at an earlier hour than usual.

had six children ; and this son, her youngest child, was the first one who had made known to her that he had found Jesus. Her feelings may better be imagined than described.

One of the ministers accepted the invitation of an unconverted young man to spend a night at his house. In conversation, he learned that his hospitable friend was seriously impressed with a sense of the importance of religion. In the evening he had the pleasure of seeing him present himself for the prayers of the people of God ; yet he returned to his house destitute of a sense of the Saviour's love. But in the morning he could tell his guest the good news that, during the night, Jesus had manifested himself in mercy to his soul. In the course of the morning, I called to see the minister who lodged there. As I approached the door, I heard the minister praying very earnestly for some awakened, seeking soul ; and supposing him to refer to the gentleman of the house, I felt a great desire that the petition might be answered. But great was my joyful surprise when, on the opening of the door at the close of prayer, I learned from the minister that his host was already rejoicing in the Lord. His brother-in-law, Mr. S., was there, and *he* was the mourner for whom the minister had just been praying. He was an amiable young

man, and appeared to be under deep concern of mind. It seems that, seeing the heaven-born peace and joy of his brother-in-law, who had just found the Lord, he was led to feel the necessity of seeking Jesus himself. While his sister looked with pity on her unforgiven and sorrowful brother, she could rejoice with her husband, who had just begun to taste a Saviour's love. It was a scene deeply affecting to every person present.

Mr. S. went to the house of prayer at eleven o'clock, and willingly came forward as a seeker of religion when the invitation was given; but he remarked to a pious person, who conversed with him while the congregation was singing, that he thought there was but a small chance for him, and that everything looked dark and discouraging. I believe it was at the close of the services of the next evening that he went to a Christian friend, who had taken a deep interest in his welfare, and begged him to remember him in his private devotions. He was asked if he felt discouraged in seeking, and replied that he did not by any means. The next morning, just as the preacher was about to commence the pulpit exercises, Mr. S. approached the pulpit stairs, and told the servant of God that he, too, was happy in the Lord. The preacher and people

rejoiced with him, and I think immediately sung the doxology—

“Praise God, from whom all blessings flow.”

And as, in days of old, Andrew found his own brother Simon, and told him that he had “found the Messiah,” so this man soon told his unconverted brother what great things God had done for him. These brothers were partners in business, and their dwellings were very near together. Mr. S. could speak with assurance of the reality of experimental religion. His brother, who had the utmost confidence in his veracity, consented to believe in the reality of the change, and in its heavenly origin. Now, like a consistent man, he sought the same blessing in the same humble manner; and in less than a week from the time when Mr. S. first went to the altar for prayer, he and his brother were rejoicing together in the smiles of a forgiving God. Their pleasant mansions became houses of prayer; and while they thankfully enjoyed the blessings of this life, they could look forward to a better and far more glorious abode on high.

A certain man, about forty-five years of age, who had been very active and influential in political matters, but very inattentive to the concerns of religion, was led by curiosity to attend

some of our meetings in this good revival. He possessed a considerable share of worldly property, kept a public house of entertainment, and, but a few years previous, had been sheriff of that county. His pious mother, a member of the Baptist Church, had been praying for his conversion for about forty years. After attending the meeting a few times, his mind became somewhat seriously impressed; but he felt disposed to shake off his solemn feelings, if possible, and even resorted to a more free use of ardent spirits, as a means of driving uneasy feelings from his mind. But such was God's amazing mercy to this rebel against his government, that (to use his own language) the more he drank the more sober he seemed to feel. At length he sought an opportunity of conversing with my colleague, acknowledged that he occasionally felt the necessity of religion, and said that if his feelings had been as tender that evening as they were a few hours before, he would have gone forward with mourning penitents. The report of this conversation waked up strong desires in the hearts of Christians for the conversion of one who had been so active in worldly affairs, and so far from religion. On the next day business called him away to the seat of justice in that county, and *some feared* that this might dissipate his serious

feelings; but God ordered it otherwise. One of the judges of the court perceiving, from his countenance, that his mind was uneasy, ventured to inquire into the cause, and to introduce the subject of religion. Having lately come out on the Lord's side himself, he urged this awakened man earnestly and perseveringly to seek the blessing of God. In the mean time, Christians were fervently praying in their closets that the good Spirit would continue to move on his heart. After his return he resumed his attendance on the protracted meeting, and ventured to rise up in the congregation as a subject of their prayers. His friend, the judge, soon wrote him a letter, advising him to suffer nothing to hinder him from entering in at the strait gate.

It was a joyful morning to my soul when I heard that the inn-keeper had appeared to be deeply impressed on the previous evening, and had gone to the mourners' seat. On the following day he rose up again for the intercessions of the righteous, at the same time inviting one of his former associates in folly, who was sitting by his side, to rise up with him, and the invitation was successful. On a certain evening he went to a man in the house of worship, with whom he had been at variance, and asked his forgiveness. *Soon after this another interview took place be-*

tween them, and all their former animosity was buried by mutual consent.

Two or three days passed away, and the sheriff's anxiety became so great that he arose again and again from his bed during one night, to read the book of God and to plead for mercy. His wife, who had found pardon but a day or two before, was rejoicing in the Lord, and urging him to continue in prayer for his own soul's salvation.* At length the morning light dawned; one or two Christian friends, who lodged at his house during that night, arose; they joined in prayer, and soon he cast himself on the merits of Christ, and to his joy the Sun of righteousness arose "with healing in his wings."

The happiness which he found in Jesus was so great, that he ardently desired that his former companions in sin might enjoy it also. The service of God appeared so reasonable, that he could not feel willing that any of his friends should neglect it any longer. The individual whose case was first presented to his mind as the subject of deep solicitude was C. P., Esq., living six or seven miles from him. It seemed to be a providential circumstance that this man should come up to the meeting on that very day, and thus give to the convert such a good opportu-

* Four or five years afterward she died in the faith.

nity (as they met at the church) to tell him of the goodness of God. After he had entered the place of worship, and even after the religious exercises had commenced, (if I was rightly informed,) when any of his particular friends entered the house he could not well refrain from speaking aloud to them of the happy change which had taken place in his mind. The minister who was to preach at that time went through the introductory exercises of singing and prayer, but was so overcome by his feelings of joy and gratitude that, even after he had named his text, he sat down, saying to another minister who was in the desk with him, "I *cannot* preach now." The other one then rose, and said, "Brother Worth says he *cannot* preach now, and I am not certain that I can; but I will try." The sheriff then said that he would endeavor to be as quiet as possible, and some remarks were made on the text which had been named.

This convert often spoke in our meetings of God's mercy to him when we gave opportunity for testimonies of this kind. Frequently he spoke of himself as having been one of the chief of sinners. "I have lived forty-five years in the world," said he, "enjoying almost uninterrupted health, and the comforts of life in abundance, and never thanked God for them till the morn-

ing of day before yesterday. Is it not abominable?" Those who had known his manner of life, gazed, listened, wondered, and some of them repented and believed. Among the latter was Mr. P., whom I have already mentioned. Many others in the neighborhood were brought to repentance within a few days after the inn-keeper's conversion.

"During forty years, I have been praying for this," said his aged, widowed mother, "and now I can almost say, 'Now lettest thou thy hand-maid depart in peace, for my eyes have seen thy salvation.'"

It was but a few mornings after his conversion that I heard him tell a man who called for a glass of ardent spirits that he should sell none to him. On the same morning he told some of his friends, whom he met near the door of the church, that he had left part of his family at home to remove the liquors out of his bar, and that he was expecting to take brother Jones home with him after service, to knock down and remove the shelves on which the liquor had stood. Near the close of the day I was passing his house, and stepped into what had been his bar-room, where very many glasses of intoxicating liquor had been *drunk*. The liquor was gone, the shelves were *removed*, and the landlord was happy in God.

I went in, drank a glass of water, and sung a short song of praise. "The bliss of that hour was full."


Soon after his conversion, he expressed a desire to have his birth-day (which would shortly occur) celebrated by a religious meeting in his own house. A large chamber, which had been used for dancing on such occasions, as well as at other times, was now to be occupied by an assembly met to worship God. Accordingly, an appointment was made, the congregation assembled, the room (which would hold perhaps two hundred persons) was entirely full, and the stairway leading to the chamber was crowded with people, who appeared eager to hear every word which the preacher uttered. Many tears were shed by my hearers, and some by my own eyes during that sermon. Liberty being given for others to speak at the close of the sermon, the first person who rose was the sheriff. With streaming eyes, he said, "I have often danced in this room, but the love of Christ now causes my heart to dance within me for joy." One after another arose and spoke a few words for the Lord. Many of them adverted to the seasons of vain mirth in which they had formerly participated, even in that very place. They told us, with deep emotion, how much better they en-

PASSAGES IN THE LIFE

l the service of God than they formerly did
ranities of the world.

must be permitted to mention one or two
re instances in this revival. A young woman,
o was among the first to manifest a desire to
ak the Lord, remained sorrowful for a long
me; while others found comfort who had more
ecently begun to call upon the Lord. She be-
ame almost discouraged. Her pious friends
urged her to continue coming, with other mourn-
ers, to the altar. For a time, their entreaties
seemed to be in vain; but at length she again
took courage, renewed her supplications at the
mercy-seat, and casting herself upon the merits
of Jesus, she found the love of God shed abroad
in her heart.

An amiable young man, who held a military
office of some importance, was often invited to
seek the great salvation. For a time he seemed
unmoved, though he continued to listen atten-
tively to the word. His mind at length becam
more serious; and the personal efforts of a neig
bor, recently converted, were successful in brin
ing him to the cross of Christ. It was but
few days after he commenced going to the a
before God gave him peace of conscience, thro
faith in Christ Jesus. After having foug
few years under the banner of Immanuel



was called to lay down the sword and shield, and take up the golden harp and the palm of victory.


An aged man in the neighborhood, who had himself very generally neglected the means of grace, endeavored to hinder his awakened daughter; but she sought and found the Saviour, and with tears besought Christians to pray for her father. Awakening mercy reached his heart at last, and he was willing to let it be known in the congregation. At an early hour on the following day I was requested by a young convert to visit this aged mourner, who resided near the house where I had lodged. I had proceeded but a few rods before I saw him coming toward me. His brother and brother's wife were just behind him; while he, with gushing tears, exclaimed as he walked along the street, "Pray for me, a poor old sinner! pray that I may have a heart to pray for myself!" This was, indeed, a melting sight. We returned with him to the house where I had lodged, and united our supplications in his behalf till it was time to go to the house of prayer. In the course of a few days, this man was heard speaking of the goodness of God to his soul.

In one instance, when we were assembled to commence public worship, a man of near fifty

years of age, who had been mourning during some days, rose up before our meeting was opened, and told us what the Almighty had done for him in the course of the past night. His testimony was accompanied with shouts of praise. Our friends usually closed the evening service about nine o'clock; and they were reminded from the pulpit, more than once, that a suitable portion of sleep at proper times was necessary to the continued activity of body and mind.

For thirty-three days in succession (with the exception of two days* only) there was public worship at eleven in the morning and at half-past six in the evening. In that time about seventy-five persons professed to find peace in believing. If my memory be correct, the number of mourners who came to the altar on the last evening of our protracted meeting amounted to twenty or thirty. If it be asked why we closed our series of meetings while the prospect was still so very favorable, I answer, it was not because we were weary of cultivating Immanuel's lands. Neither was it because we had lost our confidence in the great Lord of the harvest, without whom he that planteth and he that watereth are nothing; but the Macedonian cry from Port Jefferson became

* On one of those days there was worship at the church in the daytime, and on the other in the evening only.



so loud and urgent, that we could not conscientiously refuse any longer to listen to that call.

Should I attempt to be as particular in detailing circumstances in the other revivals which took place on Smithtown circuit as I have been with regard to East Middle Island, I should swell my narrative much beyond due bounds, and probably tire the patience of many readers. Should I pass over those revivals in a very cursory manner, some might infer they were not very interesting seasons; while some good brethren residing in those places, if they should read this book, might imagine that the author was not disposed to record the goodness of God to them and their neighbors. Both of these would be very incorrect inferences. The kindness and candor of those brethren lead me to hope that they will draw no such conclusion. I will therefore *try* to be brief.

At Port Jefferson the brethren resolved to "trust in the Lord and do good,"* and they found that their confidence and labor were not in vain in the Lord. God truly wrought wonders.

Some may suppose that the Millerite excitement, which was very considerable at that time, in some places not far from our circuit, was the

* The first sermon at this meeting was preached from this *text*.

means of commencing these revivals. But this is a mistake. There was but little agitation on this subject among us, while the revivals were going on powerfully. Even after the awakenings had to some extent subsided, all the efforts of those mistaken persons among us accomplished but little. The work of the Lord went on when the ministers were necessarily absent. At one time, when I was called away from Port Jefferson on Saturday afternoon, I said to the brethren, "The Lord will preach by his Spirit this evening." When I returned to them, on the afternoon of the next day, I found the church full of people, and learned to my joy that God had indeed been working gloriously during the absence of his ministers. Men of standing and influence in the place were rejoicing in that Saviour who had just set their souls at liberty. Some of those men had not even asked the prayers of Christians when I left the place on the preceding day; but in the evening of that day their hearts had melted before the Lord. Some of them have since proved the excellency of religion in the trying hour of death.

The work spread eastward and westward from this place, and Methodist classes were formed *both in Setauket and Mount Sinai from the fruits of this revival.* At Stony Brook, where religion

had been at a low ebb for some years, God converted a number of souls in a very short time. Several of the converts in these revivals were men that were heads of families, and some of them had publicly denied the Lord that bought them with his blood ; but now they fell at his feet, and acknowledged him to be Lord of all.

In every appointment on the circuit we saw the work of the Lord revive ; and the reader can form some idea of the effects of those revivals when he is told that about three hundred and fifty were admitted on probation during that conference year, besides several who cast in their lots with other churches. The whole number of members at the commencement of the year amounted only to three hundred and sixty-three.

If these pages should fall into the hands of any one who found the Lord in those revivals, and has now departed from him, let me say to that wanderer, " Come back to Christ ; why wilt thou forever die ? "

My colleagues during the second year of my labors on the Smithtown circuit were Rev. Nathan Rice and Rev. J. N. Robinson. We labored to build up believers, and young converts especially, by urging them to go on to Christian, evangelical perfection.

While I was residing in Smithtown, I used to

see occasionally the remnant of the boiler of that ill-fated steamer, the Lexington. It had been dragged from the place where it sunk to a place not far from the shore, by a company of persons who were using a diving-bell, with the hope of finding something valuable. At low water a part of the boiler was visible, and presented to my eye, as I walked alone on the sandy beach, a solemn memento of the uncertainty of human life, and the transitory nature of all sublunary objects.

On the first day of May, 1844, I sat in the gallery of the Green-street church, in New-York, and saw the delegates of thirty-three annual conferences commence their responsible business as a General Conference. On the twenty-second of the same month I heard the Rev. Alfred Griffith, of the Baltimore Conference, make the following motion in that body, which was seconded by the Rev. John Davis, of the same conference :

“*Resolved*, That the Rev. James O. Andrew be, and he is hereby, affectionately requested to resign his office as one of the bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church.”

This resolution was introduced by a preamble, assigning reasons for this course. The subject was discussed for many days. As I was laboring on my circuit most of the time while the

General Conference was in session, I heard but one or two of the sermons preached by the delegates, and but a small part of the debates. Some of the speeches in conference which I heard were very interesting to me. One of these was from Dr. Olin, president of the Wesleyan University. Another eloquent speech which I heard was delivered by Rev. G. F. Pierce, of the Georgia Conference; and I also heard a most eloquent reply to Mr. Pierce from Rev. Jesse T. Peck, of the Troy Conference. This reply was rendered still more effective by the kindness of spirit which it breathed, and the affectionate manner in which it was delivered. All these speeches, and many more, referred to the difficulties of Bishop Andrew's case, growing out of that most difficult and troublesome subject—*slavery*. It is well known that these controversies resulted in the separation of the southern from the northern section of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

In the year 1844 my dear mother was called home from the valley of tears to the land of rest. I was in the house of God at Setauket, attending a protracted meeting, when the letter containing these solemn tidings was put into my hands. When I perused the account of her death, it brought forcibly to my mind the prayers which she had offered for me, and the tears which she

had shed when advising, admonishing, and encouraging me in the work of my Master. After many years of extreme weakness, she died in a blessed hope of a glorious immortality. God grant that I may meet her happy spirit in the paradise of God!

CHAPTER X.

NORTH HEMPSTEAD — HUNTINGTON — PLEASANTVILLE.

I now proceed to give a sketch of some of the circumstances which have marked the last five years of my life. There are some reasons, which will probably occur to most readers, which may incline a man who writes an autobiography to be more brief in a narrative of events which have recently transpired than he has been in describing those which took place at an earlier period.

The circuit now called North Hempstead is in Queens county, Long Island. It was formerly known by the name of Hempstead Harbor. So it was called when I went there in June, 1844; but in 1845 the name was changed to North Hempstead. The circuit included the following preaching-places: Roslyn, Norwich, Oyster Bay, Glen Cove, Buckram, Seasingtown, Manhasset, Great Neck, and the Court-house. A local preacher by the name of Sweeney, (who has since died in St. Louis, and gone to his reward,) was my assistant during a part of the time. Brother O. E. Brown was sent to labor with me

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during the second year of my continuance on the circuit.

We were favored with a good revival in Glen Cove, and some awakenings and conversions in other places. The kindness of the people to me I hope never to forget. Especially do I recollect a family where I was detained by sickness for a number of days, and whose attention to me at that time excited my warmest gratitude.

Near the end of the second year I was permitted to visit my old friends in Smithtown Branch, where I had formerly resided, and to be present when their beautiful new church was dedicated to the Lord of Hosts by Bishop Janes.

About seven miles from my house lived an old minister of the gospel, who was waiting for his dismission. His name was John B. Matthias, well known in different parts by the older Methodists as having been a son of thunder. Although afflicted with blindness, yet I generally found him contented, thankful, and happy. As one of my sons was at a boarding-school in Hempstead, where this old soldier of the cross dwelt, I had occasion to visit the place several times, and generally endeavored to call on him, for I found it very profitable to my soul.

Huntington circuit was my next field of labor, and Isaac Sanford was my colleague. His grand-

father had heard me preach my first sermon in 1822, and his uncle was converted at a camp-meeting in 1824, which I well remember.* Huntington, Cold Spring, Northport, Woodbury, West Hills, and Lloyd's Neck, are the names of different places at which we preached Jesus and his salvation. Among other ministers from abroad who assisted us in striving to win souls to Christ, was the Rev. John Luckey. He kindly spent nine days with us, and our hearts were knit together like the hearts of David and Jonathan.†

Some of the most pleasant seasons which I had among this people were in that romantic, retired spot called Lloyd's Neck. In the Revolutionary war many of the soldiers of Britain were buried in this place, far from the land of their birth and from the abodes of their friends. Here, within a few years, a Methodist society had been formed, whose meetings were generally crowned with much of the divine presence.

While I was traveling North Hempstead and Huntington circuits, I attended three camp-meet-

* See page 78 and page 101 of Part I. of my Narrative.

† Since I commenced writing these pages, I have been much cheered in learning that some gracious revivals have crowned the labors of my successors on the Huntington circuit. Brothers Devinne and Hollis have seen the pleasure of the Lord prosper in their hands.

ings in Farmingdale, on Long Island, and one at Rye, in Westchester county. They were all very gracious seasons, and there were some striking displays of divine power and mercy.

At Huntington I received a visit from a good old pilgrim, with whom my wife and myself had been well acquainted in the Smithtown circuit. Her name was Nancy Overton. Her willingness to confess her Master, her ardor in prayer, her kindness to the poor, her faithful warnings to sinners, her hospitality to the servants of the Lord, and her shouts of praise, will long be remembered by many in Brookhaven and Smithtown. Soon after she made us that visit, the angels were sent to convey her to her heavenly home.

At the conference of 1847 I was appointed to Pleasantville, in Westchester county. On my way to that place I passed near the grave-yard in White Plains, where lie the remains of A. Van Nostrand. His pious conversation, more than fifty years ago, was the means of awakening the individual whose piety I have just been describing. They have now met, I trust, in the kingdom of their Father.

At Pleasantville I met with a very kind relation. Though I was a perfect stranger to all every individual, yet I never went to any

where I sooner felt myself perfectly at home. Brother M. Richardson was my presiding elder, and we had several very good quarterly meetings. Brother J. Luckey labored in Newcastle, about five miles from Pleasantville. Both of these charges were associated in one quarterly conference. During the two conference years there were two interesting revivals at Newcastle, and two at Pines Bridge, which was a part of brother Luckey's charge. We also had three showers of mercy in the Pleasantville charge. One was at a protracted meeting in October, 1847, when we had some assistance from brother Redfield. In this meeting some were sanctified, and a few converted. In the following winter God commenced a good work in the west part of my field of labor, through the instrumentality of Henry Hobby, a local preacher in our society. In about a year from that time we had a good protracted meeting in Pleasantville church, resulting in the conversion and reclaiming of more than twenty persons. Brother Luckey co-operated with us in these meetings, and we were assisted to some extent by other ministers. The camp-meeting in Sing Sing in 1847, and another one in Pleasantville in 1848, were rendered useful to our society.

At Sing Sing, a scene occurred on the last day

of the meeting which I shall long remember. Most of the people had retired from the ground. While a few were waiting for conveyances to their homes, a meeting for prayer, and speaking of the goodness of God, was held before the stand. It was a joyful season. But there stood a young man, leaning on the railing which surrounded this happy company, who wept profusely. Mrs. Pease, of New-York, who knew the young man's mother in the days of her youth, requested me to speak personally to him. She also informed me that he was the son of a Methodist minister, under whose word I had often been refreshed thirty years ago. At first the young man seemed unwilling to yield to his feelings. Brother J. B. Wakely soon came to our help, and the youth bowed before the Lord and earnestly cried for mercy. Although that meeting closed before he obtained the blessing which he sought, yet, when I went from the ground, I left him in a tent on his knees, with sympathizing friends around him, calling upon the Lord. When I next met him, he was rejoicing in God his Saviour.

Not only were the camp-meetings, protracted meetings, &c., attended with the divine blessing, but many of our ordinary meetings were graciously favored with the presence of the Great

Master. I think I have experienced more enjoyment in *class-meetings* in Pleasantville society, than in any other place where I have resided since I entered the ministry.

I had the pleasure of admitting into full membership several persons who had been received on trial by brother Pelton just before I went to that place. The whole number received on probation by me while I was there was about seventy.

For all the kindness manifested to me and my family, I desire to feel truly thankful; but especially I desire to return thanks to God for his great goodness. Would to God that all who read these pages may have an abundant entrance, through the merits of Christ, into the kingdom of God! There may I be permitted forever to adore the mercy of the Lord of Hosts to me, AN UNWORTHY SINNER SAVED BY GRACE.



BRIEF MEMOIR
OF THE
REV. HEZEKIAH CALVIN WOOSTER.
BY REV. ELBERT OSBOEN.

HEZEKIAH CALVIN WOOSTER, son of Edward Wooster, was born in Woodbury, Conn., May 20, 1771. While a child he, like others, was visited with the awakening grace of God from time to time, but continued to neglect his soul's salvation till he was a little more than twenty years old. About that time the Lord revived his work in Westerlo,* Albany Co., New York, where he and his parents then resided, having removed from Woodbury about four years before this time. Young Wooster's mind was much affected, so that he often trembled while the prayers of the pious part of his father's family were going up to heaven in his behalf. Still he loved the company of the ungodly, and frequently associated with them on Sabbath evenings,

* Perhaps the town of Westerlo has been set off from Coeymans since the period above alluded to.

to the grief of his godly friends. On Sabbath evening, October 9, 1791, he was intending to spend his time with some of his thoughtless acquaintance. While a few pious persons, who had met for religious conversation and prayer, were talking of the goodness of God, conviction reached his heart, particularly when his pious sister, who was a young woman, exhorted him to seek the Lord. When he saw her, who had been a short time before vain and trifling like himself, now looking upon him with tender affection and regard for his soul's welfare, and when he heard her assure him that she had prayed and would pray for him, his mind was powerfully impressed. He now went out of the door, and, standing near it, looked up toward heaven, with tears in his eyes, and offered up a few petitions to God. Immediately his conviction increased, and with trembling limbs he endeavored to get further from the house; but strength failed him, so that he could walk only two or three rods. After seven or eight minutes of great agony this overwhelming grief in some degree subsided, but for three days he was a very melancholy person, under a sense of sin; yet he continued to read the Scriptures

and pray to God. When three days had expired, gleams of hope arose in his mind from some passages of holy writ. Yet he mourned much over the hardness of his heart, and was often tempted to refrain from secret prayer by suggestions that he would see some supernatural, frightful appearance if he went out in the evening to pray.

About the first of November, while engaged in prayer, he received a good degree of consolation, but still sought for a bright witness. November 6th he was with a family in their morning devotions, where a Methodist minister by the name of Bloodgood* was present. While they were singing a hymn he burst into tears, fell to the floor, and cried for mercy. At length the burden he felt on his mind when he fell to the floor left him; but it was not till December 1st of the same year that he received a clear, abiding witness of his acceptance with God.

In the commencement of the year 1792 he saw the necessity of a deeper work of grace to cleanse him from inbred sin. It appears

* Probably the Rev. John Bloodgood, whose solemnity, piety, and usefulness are still remembered in many places in Connecticut and New York.

that about this time the Rev. Freeborn Garretson paid a visit to his father's house, which, it is probable, proved a blessing to him; for shortly after, February 6, 1792, he received the blessing of perfect love, only about two months after he was justified. Many in paradise can doubtless bless God that Mr. Wooster received this blessing, and that they heard the blessed doctrine proclaimed by his lips. Let every young convert who reads this account remember that it is not the will of God that he should live for two or ten years in a merely justified state. The sooner he becomes entirely holy the better.

At the Conference held in Albany in July, 1793, he was admitted on trial as a traveling preacher, and was appointed to Granville Circuit, in Massachusetts. Great were the trials of his mind after he received his appointment, especially in view of his inability for so great a work. Probably all who have been eminently useful have at times, in the course of their lives, been almost overcor with similar sensations.

Yet, as he saw no way to escape the cross without offending his God, he cried to (**day and night for strength, and receive**

answer by the application of these words: "Who made man's mouth?" But Satan followed him closely. On his journey, when he looked over the distant mountains before him, and reflected that he was going beyond those mountains to travel among strangers and preach the Gospel, tears would gush from his eyes, and he was almost ready to sink down under the thought. But he trusted in God, who gave him strength to go forward. When he arrived on the circuit the cross was heavy; but he found kind friends, whose hearts God opened to receive him; and when the writer of this account traveled on that circuit, thirty-five years afterward, he found some pious persons to whom the name of Wooster was precious.

After about three months he was changed from that circuit to Pittsfield Circuit, I suppose by his presiding elder. Here he had at times great liberty in preaching; and there the same enemy who had endeavored to discourage him endeavored to inflate him with pride. The Lord enabled him to overcome these temptations also. Some souls were awakened on this circuit while he labored there. From this field of labor he *was removed to Cambridge Circuit by his*

presiding elder, who, as it appears by the Minutes, was the Rev. Thomas Ware.

While the subject of this memoir was on his way to Cambridge Circuit, he spent one Sabbath in his father's neighborhood, and found great freedom in preaching to his old acquaintance. While on Cambridge Circuit he labored in weakness of body, which prevented him from reading much, and from which Satan drew an argument to discourage him in the work of the ministry. Yet his belief was that all his bodily afflictions were for the good of his soul, for they led him to pray day and night for more grace. His pious colleague encouraged him to go forward, and God gave him some fruit of his labors.

At the Conference in September, 1794, he was appointed to ride on Elizabethtown Circuit, in New Jersey. Here he had good success. Yet in view of the temptations which he met with, he saw there was great danger that sanctified souls might fall from grace without constant watchfulness and prayer.

In about six months he was removed to Flanders Circuit, New Jersey, where his colleague was, I believe, Rev. Shadrach Bost-

wick. He appears to have enjoyed his mind well on this circuit, perhaps better than he had done at any time before since he commenced traveling; and probably he saw greater displays of divine power and mercy than he had ever seen before.

At the Conference in White Plains, N. Y., in September, 1795, he was admitted into full connection as a traveling preacher, ordained a deacon in the Church, and appointed to Columbia Circuit, embracing a part, if not the whole, of Columbia County, in the State of New York.

Let us suspend our narrative for a moment to remark on the frequent removals of this ambassador of Christ from one part of the work to another. So it was frequently in those days with Methodist ministers. And were preachers ever more useful than they were? Did their frequent removals operate as a means of preventing their usefulness, or of exciting murmurings in their breasts? Shall *we* complain because some of us are removed oftener or further than is perfectly agreeable to our temporal convenience?

In 1796 he offered himself as a missionary to labor in the province of Upper Canada, and was appointed, as appears from the Min-

utes, to labor alone on the Oswegatchie Circuit. From an obituary article published in the Minutes of conference for 1814 concerning the preacher who was his fellow-traveler on this journey to Canada, it appears they had to encounter great difficulties on their way. They lay on the ground twenty-three nights with nothing but a blanket, and sometimes a little straw; and being longer on the way than they expected, their provisions almost failed, so that they were reduced to two scanty meals a day, and those of an indifferent kind; but, at length arriving at the place of their destination, they were fully compensated for their sufferings by the cordiality with which they were received. Here they resolved to preach and enforce the doctrine of sanctification, and soon saw the fruit of their labors in a great revival of religion, in which many were made the happy subjects both of justifying and sanctifying grace. A letter which he wrote to his pious and "honored parents," as he styles them, bearing date December 31, 1796, informed them that he commenced preaching the blessed doctrine of entire sanctification immediately on his arrival in the province; that he urged it upon the church in their class-meetings, and

related to them his own experience of God's merciful power; and that these efforts had already been owned of God to the sanctification of more than twenty souls. It seems the work began with an old gentleman. When he received the blessing, his family were led to seek for the same, and soon four of his children were rejoicing in full salvation. The struggles of those who were seeking for purity of heart were earnest, and they generally received a bright witness of the blessing.

Through a letter written by him in May, 1797, his parents received the joyful news that the work of God was going on with increasing power in the field of their son's labors. The revival which had begun in the sanctification of some souls, as noticed in his former letter, was now spreading in its awakening and converting energies among the ungodly; so that whole families had been blessed of God, and sinners from seven to eighty years of age had been brought home to the Saviour. This work was attended with such power that some of the awakened sinners fell to the floor and cried aloud for mercy. Nor did they cry in vain. *During one tour around the circuit, which*

MEMOIR OF REV. H. C. WOOSTER.

made in company with his presiding elder, was thought fifty souls were either converted or sanctified. During the second quarter that he traveled on that circuit, he supposed that the number of instances of justifying and sanctifying grace that occurred amounted to about two hundred. He rejoiced also to be able to inform his dear father and mother that another son of theirs, who was residing in Montreal, had been to visit him on his circuit, and had there found the reclaiming and sanctifying grace of God, and had gone back to Montreal happy in God. He also spoke with animation of the zeal and success of some other ministers of the Gospel who were laboring in different parts of the province. But amid the victories which he recorded he expresses an ardent desire that all the glory should be given to the Most High and that his friends would pray for him, that he might be kept humble at the feet of Jesus. How necessary is it that ministers offer earnest prayer to God for deep humility times of revival! For what would it quickly grieve the Spirit of God than that that glory to ourselves which belongs to God?

The letters which he received from other preachers laboring in the province of Upper Canada at that time show that God was carrying on a glorious and powerful work among the people. In the summer of 1797 he received a very encouraging and affectionate letter from the brother with whom he had traveled on Flanders Circuit. He expressed great joy on account of the intelligence which he had received of the prosperity of religion in the field where Mr. Wooster was laboring.

The first information which I received concerning H. C. Wooster was in the year 1812, from a minister who had succeeded him as a traveling preacher in Canada. If I recollect rightly, that minister said that, from what he had heard of him, he had formed the opinion that he was the holiest man that ever was in America. It is very possible that this was using too strong language; but it shows that his labors, example, and success in the work of the Lord while in Canada had been such as to leave a sweet perfume in the memory of those who had been personally acquainted with him. I am informed at that time he seldom, if ever, conversed on temporal things. ~~Not that he~~

thought this sinful, when it was necessary. But perhaps he thought that, though necessary for others, it was not often so for him. The necessity of holiness of heart as a prerequisite for heaven was a favorite theme with him. Indeed, this is evident from his letters to his friends. For, like St. Paul, whose soul panted with ardent desire for the salvation of his own nation, the Jews, while he was far distant from them, so did Mr. Wooster, while laboring with all his might in the wilds of Upper Canada for the good of souls there, yet earnestly desire, not only the justification, but the full sanctification of his friends who resided in the United States.

Rev. James Coleman* preached occasionally at my father's house in 1817. He had been personally acquainted with Mr. Wooster in Canada, having gone there a year or two before him, and remained there, laboring in some parts of the province, while Mr. Wooster continued in Canada. He told us that when Mr. Wooster came into Canada he said to the preachers and people, "Gc

* Interesting accounts of Mr. Coleman and Mr. Wooster may be found in Dr. Sprague's excellent "Annals of the American Methodist Pulpit," pp. 219-221.

hath sanctified my soul, and he will sanctify yours." This heartfelt testimony, accompanied, as it doubtless was, with a corresponding life and conversation, doubtless had a powerful effect on those who heard it; and Mr. C. soon sought and found the blessing. "Sometimes," said Mr. C., (who now rests with the saints in the world of light,) "when I have slept with him in a cold winter night, I have awoke in the night and found Brother Wooster, with his cloak wrapped about him, kneeling by the bedside praying to God."* His prayer was doubtless the prayer of faith. There was one expression which it is said he frequently used in prayer, in the public congregation, as well as elsewhere. It was this: "Smite them, my God." It was not a prayer that God would smite sinners with the rod of his wrath to destroy them, but with the hand of his awakening power, to rouse them from their dangerous lethargy in sin. In answer to this short but expressive petition, offered up in faith to God, sinners, it is said, have often fallen under the convicting en-

* It is *possible* that this holy man of God *sometimes* unintentionally erred, by exposing his health too much in this way.

ergies of the Holy Ghost, like men slain in battle.

Even when his health was so affected by disease that he could not articulate in a louder voice than a whisper, his exhortations were attended with the same divine influence; and then, as well as when he had the use of his voice, he did not forget to press the subject which lay near his heart: entire sanctification, perfect love, holiness of heart.

In a letter to his parents, dated October, 1797, he speaks of having taken a bad cold. It is possible that his great exertions in the revival which he was permitted to witness laid the foundation of that disease which terminated in his death. His brother Edward, in a letter to him, written in the summer of 1798, mentions having received one from him, dated May 4th of that year, in which he had mentioned his ill health. In June, 1798, he came home to his father's house sick with the consumption.

While on this journey he was (according to the strength he had remaining) laborious and useful. I have been told that when Mr. K., a pious and eminent preacher, who had been acquainted with him, heard that *he had worn himself down with hard labor*

in the revival, and that he was on his way back toward his father's house, he resolved to reprove Mr. Wooster for his excessive exertions if he met with him. He thought it probable that he would call at his house as he passed on; and perhaps thinking it possible that he might yet recover, so as to be able to labor in the vineyard again, he designed to express his opinion to him with regard to his laborious and exhausting efforts. At length Mr. Wooster arrived; but when he entered the room there was such a heavenly smile on his countenance, and so much of his Master's image in his appearance, that Mr. K. burst into tears, and wept like a little child. Nor did he find himself inclined to give the intended reproof at all to his afflicted and holy brother. When he reached his father's house, and his pale, emaciated frame met the eye of his affectionate mother, she burst into tears, for she saw that disease was doing its fatal work.

"Why do you weep, my dear mother?" said the Christian hero. "If I knew I should die before to-morrow morning, I could lie down to sleep this evening as calmly as I ever did in all my life." Sanctifying grace *had* saved him from death's cruel sting, and

God gave him "the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

A letter, which appears to have been addressed to him soon after his return to his father's house by a fellow-laborer in the Gospel, alludes to the success with which Mr. Wooster had labored in bodily weakness, while on his journey home, although consumption was wasting the vital energies of his system. An instance is mentioned where the sight of this good man's countenance (as he lay asleep, resting himself from the fatigues of his journey) produced a powerful impression and beneficial effect on the mind of a traveling preacher who called in to see him. A few months before illness constrained him to leave his beloved Christian friends in Canada, where he had seen such glorious displays of divine power, his heart had been gladdened by the coming of a dear brother in Christ* to the British dominions, who had formerly labored with him on a circuit in the State of New York. Their affection toward each other seems to have been very strong. This friend remained in Canada preaching the Gospel after Mr.

* Rev. Michael Coate, who afterward filled the office of presiding elder in the Philadelphia Conference.

Wooster had returned to the United States. About six weeks after he reached home he received a letter from his dear friend, which breathes a most excellent spirit of humility and love. It appears from this letter that he had received one from Mr. Wooster not long before, and that it came to hand just as he was going into the house of worship to preach. After he ascended the pulpit, and while reading silently the letter from his friend Wooster, "the power of God Almighty came down into his soul." As he was then among the people with whom Mr. Wooster had labored, he took the liberty of reading it in class-meeting to the people, and "it was rendered a blessing." By this friend's letter Mr. Wooster received the pleasing intelligence that the work of God was graciously going on among the people whom he had been constrained to leave. "Last Sunday," says the writer, "God sanctified two souls in a public band-meeting; on Monday evening two were overwhelmed with the sanctifying power of God; on Tuesday God sanctified several more, and smote them down to the floor." And on the evening previous to the date of the letter, Mr. C. saw a similar season of overpowering grace.

Doubtless such tidings from a far country must have been very reviving to one who "preferred Jerusalem to his chief joy;" yea, "like cold water to a thirsty soul." The writer went on to inform Mr. Wooster concerning the last quarterly meeting. During the administration of the Lord's supper the Holy Ghost seemed to overshadow them; and as the people came up to commemorate the death of their dear Saviour, a risen Jesus met them in great power, so that three or four at once were deprived of their bodily strength by their deep sense of the goodness of him who died for sinners. These had to be carried away to make room for others; and so it continued with some in almost every company that successively approached the table of the Lord. Did not these humble disciples, amid the forests of Upper Canada, enjoy the presence of that same almighty Saviour whose glory caused St. John, in the rocky isle of Patmos, to fall at his feet as dead, and who enabled him, amid all his privations, to sing, "Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in *his* own blood, and hath made us kings and *priests* unto God and his Father, to him be *glory* and dominion forever?"

Mr. Wooster's pious friends in Canada did not forget him in their supplication before God when he was far from them; but in their public and private devotions implored God's blessing upon him who had been rendered so great a blessing to them. But God, who is "wonderful in counsel," and "seeth not as man seeth," saw it best to call his servant home. I regret that I have been disappointed in obtaining that particular information concerning all the circumstances of his death which would be desirable. When we recollect that God has told us that the end of the perfect and the upright man is peace, we shall conclude such must have been the end of Mr. Wooster. Accordingly, we learn from a letter written by his father, and inserted in the Minutes of 1799, that he died November 6, 1798, in the 28th year of his age, "strong in the faith and love of Jesus." His father adds, "He was an example of patience and resignation to the will of God, and professed to enjoy much of the love of God in all his sickness. When I thought he was almost done speaking, I asked him if his confidence was still strong in the Lord: he answered, 'Yes, strong! strong!' A short time before the day of his

death, when his bodily strength failed fast, he said, the nearer he drew to eternity, the brighter heaven shone upon him."

In addition to this testimony of his "honored father," I have been informed by a respected brother in the ministry, that Mr. Wooster's sister told him, that her brother was the means of awakening one soul just before he left the world. The last words which he ever addressed to his youngest sister, then unconverted, were, "Seek the Lord." These words, uttered probably in a whisper, with faltering lips, by a dying brother, were rendered the means of leading her to the Saviour.

The testimony of his father concerning the happy state of his son's mind in his last illness is corroborated by the letters written to him during that period, in which we find allusions to the information which his correspondents had received of the support and consolation granted to him during that trying season.

"The memory of the just is blessed." A pious woman, who is a daughter of Mr. Wooster's sister, informs me that she distinctly remembers the time when her uncle called her to him, laid his hand upon her

head, and impressed upon her young and tender mind the important truths of religion. This was probably during his last illness; and shows us that when his strength was almost gone, he was determined to do all that remained in his power to bring souls to God.

The subject of this brief memoir, we are told, was a man of naturally a fine appearance, and when unrenewed by grace was high-minded and gay. But grace made him very humble and solemn. I think there is reason to believe that the example and influence of this holy man of God were indirectly the means of doing much good, even after his death. A young minister, who was received on trial in the traveling connection in the year 1801, was sent to Canada the first year of his probation. He doubtless felt a quickening influence from the piety and zeal of those good people who had been blessed through the labors of H. C. Wooster. Any one, by conversing with that minister, even years afterward, might perceive that the remembrance of those scenes, and of what he had heard concerning the subject of this memoir, had a powerful effect on his mind. *His labors were abundantly blessed in different*

parts of New York and New England; in the thronged city, as well as among the log-cabins of the mountains. He was the first Methodist minister that I heard preach, and the first that ever made a pastoral visit at my father's house. I have been personally acquainted with two faithful, useful ministers of the Gospel, who, if my recollection be correct, ascribed their awakenings, under God, to the labors of this minister. Both of them, as well as their spiritual father in Christ, have left the walls of the Church militant, and are now, we trust, rejoicing with the spirit of the holy Wooster before the throne. Perhaps it will not be known till the morning of the resurrection how much of the usefulness of that spiritual father in Israel might be traced to the blessing of God upon the labors of Mr. Wooster.

I am personally acquainted with a minister now living, who states that the recollection of the humility, prayers, labors, holiness, and success of H. C. Wooster has been the means of quickening his zeal, probably hundreds of times, since he entered the gospel ministry, although Wooster was dead before he was born: "He, being dead, yet speaketh." The *Minutes of conference* containing an account

of his death, tell us "he was owned of God in a peculiar manner. He was a man of zeal, grace, and understanding, but of a slender habit of body, and could not endure all the hardships of traveling and great exertions of preaching, which zeal, attended with a great revival of the work of God, exposed him to; but it was his happiness to live, to preach, and to die in the Lord Jesus;" and he "made haste in his Christian and ministerial course."

Whether he was a very eloquent speaker or not is not known to the writer; but it is evident that his faith in God was such as to produce those labors which will cause many to rise up in the last day and call him blessed.

I will here subjoin a brief extract from Dr. Abel Stevens's "Memorials of Methodism in the Eastern States," found on page 212. He says that Wooster "began his labors professing and enjoying the blessing of that 'perfect love which casteth out fear,' and his short but useful career was attended with demonstrations of the entire consecration of his character. After laboring in 1794-95 on Elizabethtown (N. J.) and Columbia (N. Y.) Circuits, respectively, he volunteered with Samuel Coate to join James Coleman and

Darius Dunham in the new and laborious field of Upper Canada. His trials there were great. During three weeks, on his way, he lodged every night under the trees of the forests. He passed through the wilderness of that remote region like a 'flame of fire;' the long-neglected and impenitent settlers trembled under his word, while the few and scattered saints shouted aloud for joy. 'Such,' says the historian of Methodism, 'was the holy fervor of his soul, his deep devotion to God, his burning love for the souls of his fellow-men, that he was the happy instrument of kindling up such a fire in the hearts of the people wherever he went, particularly in Upper Canada, that all the waters of strife and opposition have not been able to quench it. . . . The grace of God wrought mightily in him.'* 'O what awful sensations,' exclaims the same writer, 'ran through the assemblies while Calvin Wooster, and others of like spirit, were denouncing the just judgments of God against impenitent sinners, in such pointed language as made the "ear to tingle" and the heart to palpitate.' 'Frequently,' continues the same authority, 'was his voice heard by the

* *Bangs's History of Methodism, Anno 1796.*

families where he lodged, in the night season, when rising from his bed, while others slept, he would pour out the desire of his soul unto God in earnest prayer for the salvation of souls.' And he further informs us that such was the unction of his spirit, and the bold, resistless power of his appeals to the wicked, that few of them could stand before him; they would either rush out of the house, or fall like dead men under his word. He was a man of great prevalence in prayer. An anecdote is related in illustration of the power of his faith. A revival occurred under his labors, which was attended with overpowering effects upon the people. His presiding elder, Rev. Mr. D., entering the assembly at a time when sinners were falling to the earth under the power of the truth, and the people of God were rejoicing in their victory, condemned the excitement as wildfire, and knelt down to pray that God would allay it. The devout Wooster knelt by his side, and in a whispering tone prayed, 'Lord bless Brother D.! Lord bless Brother D.!' He had not prayed thus many minutes before the presiding elder was smitten down upon the floor, and was so filled with the Holy Ghost that his com-

plaints were turned into grateful praise, and he went forth spreading the divine flame through the length and breadth of his district, 'to the joy and salvation of hundreds of immortal souls.'*

"Mr. Wooster labored with great success in Canada during 1796, '7, '8.† In the latter year he was seized with pulmonary consumption; but such was the moral power of this truly remarkable man, seeming almost to border on the miraculous, that it is authentically recorded that when so far reduced as not to be able to speak above a whisper, his whispered utterance, conveyed by another to the assembly, would thrill them like a trumpet, and fall with such energy on the attention of the hearers, that stout hearted men were smitten down to the floor; and his very aspect is said to have so shone with 'the divine glory, that it struck conviction into the hearts of many who beheld it.'‡

* Bangs's History of Methodism, Anno 1799.

† See letter of his father, in the Minutes of 1799.

‡ Bangs's History of Methodism, Anno 1799.





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